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CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

ESSAYS:

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MISCELLANIES.

CHARACTERISTICS.[1]

[1831.]

THE healthy know not of their health, but only the sick: this is the Physician's Aphorism; and applicable in a far wider sense than he gives it. We may say, it holds no less in moral, intellectual, political, poetical, than in merely corporeal therapeutics; that wherever, or in what shape soever, powers of the sort which can be named *vital* are at work, herein lies the test of their working right or working wrong.

In the Body, for example, as all doctors are agreed, the first condition of complete health is, that each organ perform its function unconsciously, unheeded; let but any organ announce its separate existence, were it even boastfully, and for pleasure, not for pain, then already has one of those unfortunate 'false centres of sensibility' established itself, already is derangement there. The perfection of bodily wellbeing is, that the collective bodily activities seem one; and be manifested, moreover, not in themselves, but in the action they accomplish. If a Dr. Kitchiner boast that his system is in

[1] EDINBURGH REVIEW, No. 108.—1. *An Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man.* By Thomas Hope. 3 vols. 8vo. London, 1831.

2. *Philosophische Vorlesungen, insbesondere über Philosophie der Sprache und des Wortes. Geschrieben und vorgetragen zu Dresden im December* 1828, *und in den ersten Tagen des Januars* 1829 (Philosophical Lectures, especially on the Philosophy of Language and the Gift of Speech. Written and delivered at Dresden in December 1828, and the early days of January 1829). By Friedrich von Schlegel. 8vo. Vienna, 1830.

high order, Dietetic Philosophy may indeed take credit; but the true Peptician was that Countryman who answered that, "for his part, he had no system." In fact, unity, agreement is always silent, or soft-voiced; it is only discord that loudly proclaims itself. So long as the several elements of Life, all fitly adjusted, can pour forth their movement like harmonious tuned strings, it is a melody and unison; Life, from its mysterious fountains, flows out as in celestial music and diapason, —which also, like that other music of the spheres, even because it is perennial and complete, without interruption and without imperfection, might be fabled to escape the ear. Thus too, in some languages, is the state of health well denoted by a term expressing unity; when we feel ourselves as we wish to be, we say that we are *whole*.

Few mortals, it is to be feared, are permanently blessed with that felicity of 'having no system;' nevertheless, most of us, looking back on young years, may remember seasons of a light, aërial translucency and elasticity and perfect freedom; the body had not yet become the prison-house of the soul, but was its vehicle and implement, like a creature of the thought, and altogether pliant to its bidding. We knew not that we had limbs, we only lifted, hurled and leapt; through eye and ear, and all avenues of sense, came clear unimpeded tidings from without, and from within issued clear victorious force; we stood as in the centre of Nature, giving and receiving, in harmony with it all; unlike Virgil's Husbandmen, 'too happy *because* we did not know our blessedness.' In those days, health and sickness were foreign traditions that did not concern us; our whole being was as yet One, the whole man like an incorporated Will. Such, were Rest or ever-successful Labour the human lot, might our life continue to be: a pure, perpetual, unregarded music; a beam of perfect white light, rendering all things visible, but itself unseen, even because it was of that perfect whiteness, and no irregular obstruction had yet broken it into colours. The beginning of Inquiry is Disease: all Science, if we consider well, as it must have originated in the feeling of something being wrong, so it is and continues to be but Division, Dismemberment, and partial healing of the wrong. Thus, as was of old written, the Tree of Knowledge springs from a root of evil, and bears fruits of good and

evil. Had Adam remained in Paradise, there had been no Anatomy and no Metaphysics.

But, alas, as the Philosopher declares, 'Life itself is a disease; a working incited by suffering;' action from passion! The memory of that first state of Freedom and paradisaic Unconsciousness has faded away into an ideal poetic dream. We stand here too conscious of many things: with Knowledge, the symptom of Derangement, we must even do our best to restore a little Order. Life is, in few instances, and at rare intervals, the diapason of a heavenly melody; oftenest the fierce jar of disruptions and convulsions, which, do what we will, there is no disregarding. Nevertheless, such is still the wish of Nature on our behalf; in all vital action, her manifest purpose and effort is, that we should be unconscious of it, and, like the peptic Countryman, never know that we 'have a system.' For, indeed, vital action everywhere is emphatically a means, not an end; Life is not given us for the mere sake of Living, but always with an ulterior external Aim: neither is it on the process, on the means, but rather on the result, that Nature, in any of her doings, is wont to intrust us with insight and volition. Boundless as is the domain of man, it is but a small fractional proportion of it that he rules with Consciousness and by Forethought: what he can contrive, nay what he can altogether know and comprehend, is essentially the mechanical, small; the great is ever, in one sense or other, the vital; it is essentially the mysterious, and only the surface of it can be understood. But Nature, it might seem, strives, like a kind mother, to hide from us even this, that she is a mystery: she will have us rest on her beautiful and awful bosom as if it were our secure home; on the bottomless boundless Deep, whereon all human things fearfully and wonderfully swim, she will have us walk and build, as if the film which supported us there (which any scratch of a bare bodkin will rend asunder, any sputter of a pistol-shot instantaneously burn up) were no film, but a solid rock-foundation. Forever in the neighbourhood of an inevitable Death, man can forget that he is born to die; of his Life, which, strictly meditated, contains in it an Immensity and an Eternity, he can conceive lightly, as of a simple implement wherewith to do day-labour and earn wages. So cunningly does Nature,

the mother of all highest Art, which only apes her from afar, 'body forth the Finite from the Infinite;' and guide man safe on his wondrous path, not more by endowing him with vision, than, at the right place, with blindness! Under all her works, chiefly under her noblest work, Life, lies a basis of Darkness, which she benignantly conceals; in Life too, the roots and inward circulations which stretch down fearfully to the regions of Death and Night, shall not hint of their existence, and only the fair stem with its leaves and flowers, shone on by the fair sun, shall disclose itself, and joyfully grow.

However, without venturing into the abstruse, or too eagerly asking Why and How, in things where our answer must needs prove, in great part, an echo of the question, let us be content to remark farther, in the merely historical way, how that Aphorism of the bodily Physician holds good in quite other departments. Of the Soul, with her activities, we shall find it no less true than of the Body: nay, cry the Spiritualists, is not that very division of the unity, Man, into a dualism of Soul and Body, itself the symptom of disease; as, perhaps, your frightful theory of Materialism, of his being but a Body, and therefore, at least, once more a unity, may be the paroxysm which was critical, and the beginning of cure! But omitting this, we observe, with confidence enough, that the truly strong mind, view it as Intellect, as Morality, or under any other aspect, is nowise the mind acquainted with its strength; that here as before the sign of health is Unconsciousness. In our inward, as in our outward world, what is mechanical lies open to us: not what is dynamical and has vitality. Of our Thinking, we might say, it is but the mere upper surface that we shape into articulate Thoughts;—underneath the region of argument and conscious discourse, lies the region of meditation; here, in its quiet mysterious depths, dwells what vital force is in us; here, if aught is to be created, and not merely manufactured and communicated, must the work go on. Manufacture is intelligible, but trivial; Creation is great, and cannot be understood. Thus if the Debater and Demonstrator, whom we may rank as the lowest of true thinkers, knows what he has done, and how he did it, the Artist, whom we rank as the highest, knows not; must speak of Inspiration, and in one or the other dialect, call his work the gift of a divinity.

But on the whole, 'genius is ever a secret to itself;' of this old truth we have, on all sides, daily evidence. The Shakspeare takes no airs for writing *Hamlet* and the *Tempest*, understands not that it is anything surprising: Milton, again, is more conscious of his faculty, which accordingly is an inferior one. On the other hand, what cackling and strutting must we not often hear and see, when, in some shape of academical prolusion, maiden speech, review article, this or the other well-fledged goose has produced its goose-egg, of quite measurable value, were it the pink of its whole kind; and wonders why all mortals do not wonder!

Foolish enough, too, was the College Tutor's surprise at Walter Shandy: how, though unread in Aristotle, he could nevertheless argue; and not knowing the name of any dialectic tool, handled them all to perfection. Is it the skilfulest anatomist that cuts the best figure at Sadler's Wells? or does the boxer hit better for knowing that he has a *flexor longus* and a *flexor brevis?* But indeed, as in the higher case of the Poet, so here in that of the Speaker and Inquirer, the true force is an unconscious one. The healthy Understanding, we should say, is not the Logical, argumentative, but the Intuitive; for the end of Understanding is not to prove and find reasons, but to know and believe. Of logic, and its limits, and uses and abuses, there were much to be said and examined; one fact, however, which chiefly concerns us here, has long been familiar: that the man of logic and the man of insight; the Reasoner and the Discoverer, or even Knower, are quite separable,—indeed, for most part, quite separate characters. In practical matters, for example, has it not become almost proverbial that the man of logic cannot prosper? This is he whom business-people call Systematic and Theoriser and Word-monger; his *vital* intellectual force lies dormant or extinct, his whole force is mechanical, conscious: of such a one it is foreseen that, when once confronted with the infinite complexities of the real world, his little compact theorem of the world will be found wanting; that unless he can throw it overboard and become a new creature, he will necessarily founder. Nay, in mere Speculation itself, the most ineffectual of all characters, generally speaking, is your dialectic man-at-arms; were he armed cap-a-pie in syllogistic mail of proof, and perfect

master of logic-fence, how little does it avail him! Consider the old Schoolmen, and their pilgrimage towards Truth: the faithfulest endeavour, incessant unwearied motion, often great natural vigour; only no progress: nothing but antic feats of one limb poised against the other; there they balanced, somersetted, and made postures; at best gyrated swiftly, with some pleasure, like Spinning Dervishes, and ended where they began. So is it, so will it always be, with all System-makers and builders of logical card-castles; of which class a certain remnant must, in every age, as they do in our own, survive and build. Logic is good, but it is not the best. The Irrefragable Doctor, with his chains of induction, his corollaries, dilemmas and other cunning logical diagrams and apparatus, will cast you a beautiful horoscope, and speak reasonable things; nevertheless your stolen jewel, which you wanted him to find you, is not forthcoming. Often by some winged word, winged as the thunderbolt is, of a Luther, a Napoleon, a Goethe, shall we see the difficulty split asunder, and its secret laid bare; while the Irrefragable, with all his logical tools, hews at it, and hovers round it, and finds it on all hands too hard for him.

Again, in the difference between Oratory and Rhetoric, as indeed everywhere in that superiority of what is called the Natural over the Artificial, we find a similar illustration. The Orator persuades and carries all with him, he knows not how; the Rhetorician can prove that he ought to have persuaded and carried all with him: the one is in a state of healthy unconsciousness, as if he 'had no system;' the other, in virtue of regimen and dietetic punctuality, feels at best that 'his system is in high order.' So stands it, in short, with all the forms of Intellect, whether as directed to the finding of truth, or to the fit imparting thereof; to Poetry, to Eloquence, to depth of Insight, which is the basis of both these; always the characteristic of right performance is a certain spontaneity, an unconsciousness; 'the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.' So that the old precept of the critic, as crabbed as it looked to his ambitious disciple, might contain in it a most fundamental truth, applicable to us all, and in much else than Literature: "Whenever you have written any sentence that looks particularly excellent, be sure to blot it out." In like manner, under milder phraseology, and with a meaning pur-

posely much wider, a living Thinker has taught us: 'Of the Wrong we are always conscious, of the Right never.'

But if such is the law with regard to Speculation and the Intellectual power of man, much more is it with regard to Conduct, and the power, manifested chiefly therein, which we name Moral. 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:' whisper not to thy own heart, How worthy is this action!—for then it is already becoming worthless. The good man is he who *works* continually in welldoing; to whom welldoing is as his natural existence, awakening no astonishment, requiring no commentary; but there, like a thing of course, and as if it could not but be so. Self-contemplation, on the other hand, is infallibly the symptom of disease, be it or be it not the sign of cure. An unhealthy Virtue is one that consumes itself to leanness in repenting and anxiety; or, still worse, that inflates itself into dropsical boastfulness and vainglory: either way, there is a self-seeking; an unprofitable looking behind us to measure the way we have made: whereas the sole concern is to walk continually forward, and make more way. If in any sphere of man's life, then in the Moral sphere, as the inmost and most vital of all, it is good that there be wholeness; that there be unconsciousness, which is the evidence of this. Let the free, reasonable Will, which dwells in us, as in our Holy of Holies, be indeed free, and obeyed like a Divinity, as is its right and its effort: the perfect obedience will be the silent one. Such perhaps were the sense of that maxim, enunciating, as is usual, but the half of a truth: To say that we have a clear conscience, is to utter a solecism; had we never sinned, we should have had no conscience. Were defeat unknown, neither would victory be celebrated by songs of triumph.

This, true enough, is an ideal, impossible state of being; yet ever the goal towards which our actual state of being strives; which it is the more perfect the nearer it can approach. Nor, in our actual world, where Labour must often prove *in*effectual, and thus in all senses Light alternate with Darkness, and the nature of an ideal Morality be much modified, is the case, thus far, materially different. It is a fact which escapes no one, that, generally speaking, whoso is acquainted with his worth has but a little stock to cultivate acquaintance with. Above all,

the public acknowledgment of such acquaintance, indicating that it has reached quite an intimate footing, bodes ill. Already, to the popular judgment, he who talks much about Virtue in the abstract, begins to be suspect; it is shrewdly guessed that where there is great preaching, there will be little almsgiving. Or again, on a wider scale, we can remark that ages of Heroism are not ages of Moral Philosophy; Virtue, when it can be philosophised of, has become aware of itself, is sickly and beginning to decline. A spontaneous habitual all-pervading spirit of Chivalrous Valour shrinks together, and perks itself up into shrivelled Points of Honour; humane Courtesy and Nobleness of mind dwindle into punctilious Politeness, 'avoiding meats;' 'paying tithe of mint and anise, neglecting the weightier matters 'of the law.' Goodness, which was a rule to itself, must now appeal to Precept, and seek strength from Sanctions; the Freewill no longer reigns unquestioned and by divine right, but like a mere earthly sovereign, by expediency, by Rewards and Punishments: or rather, let us say, the Freewill, so far as may be, has abdicated and withdrawn into the dark, and a spectral nightmare of a Necessity usurps its throne; for now that mysterious Self-impulse of the whole man, heaven-inspired, and in all senses partaking of the Infinite, being captiously questioned in a finite dialect, and answering, as it needs must, by silence, —is conceived as non-extant, and only the outward Mechanism of it remains acknowledged: of Volition, except as the synonym of Desire, we hear nothing; of 'Motives,' without any Mover, more than enough.

So too, when the generous Affections have become wellnigh paralytic, we have the reign of Sentimentality. The greatness, the profitableness, at any rate the extremely ornamental nature of high feeling, and the luxury of doing good; charity, love, self-forgetfulness, devotedness and all manner of godlike magnanimity,—are everywhere insisted on, and pressingly inculcated in speech and writing, in prose and verse; Socinian Preachers proclaim 'Benevolence' to all the four winds, and have TRUTH engraved on their watch-seals: unhappily with little or no effect. Were the limbs in right walking order, why so much demonstrating of motion? The barrenest of all mortals is the Sentimentalist. Granting even that he were sincere, and did not wilfully deceive us, or without first deceiving himself,

what good is in him? Does he not lie there as a perpetual lesson of despair, and type of bedrid valetudinarian impotence? His is emphatically a Virtue that has become, through every fibre, conscious of itself; it is all sick, and feels as if it were made of glass, and durst not touch or be touched; in the shape of work, it can do nothing; at the utmost, by incessant nursing and caudling, keep itself alive. As the last stage of all, when Virtue, properly so called, has ceased to be practised, and become extinct, and a mere remembrance, we have the era of Sophists, descanting of its existence, proving it, denying it, mechanically 'accounting' for it;—as dissectors and demonstrators cannot operate till once the body be dead.

Thus is true Moral genius, like true Intellectual, which indeed is but a lower phasis thereof, 'ever a secret to itself.' The healthy moral nature loves Goodness, and without wonder wholly lives in it: the unhealthy makes love to it, and would fain get to live in it; or, finding such courtship fruitless, turns round, and not without contempt abandons it. These curious relations of the Voluntary and Conscious to the Involuntary and Unconscious, and the small proportion which, in all departments of our life, the former bears to the latter,—might lead us into deep questions of Psychology and Physiology: such, however, belong not to our present object. Enough, if the fact itself become apparent, that Nature so meant it with us; that in this wise we are made. We may now say, that view man's individual Existence under what aspect we will, under the highest spiritual, as under the merely animal aspect, everywhere the grand vital energy, while in its sound state, is an unseen unconscious one; or, in the words of our old Aphorism, 'the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.'

To understand man, however, we must look beyond the individual man and his actions or interests, and view him in combination with his fellows. It is in Society that man first feels what he is; first becomes what he can be. In Society an altogether new set of spiritual activities are evolved in him, and the old immeasurably quickened and strengthened. Society is the genial element wherein his nature first lives and grows; the solitary man were but a small portion of himself, and must continue forever folded in, stunted and only half alive. 'Already,'

says a deep Thinker, with more meaning than will disclose itself at once, 'my opinion, my conviction, gains *infinitely* in 'strength and sureness, the moment a second mind has adopted 'it.' Such, even in its simplest form, is association; so wondrous the communion of soul with soul as directed to the mere act of Knowing! In other higher acts, the wonder is still more manifest; as in that portion of our being which we name the Moral: for properly, indeed, all communion is of a moral sort, whereof such intellectual communion (in the act of knowing) is itself an example. But with regard to Morals strictly so called, it is in Society, we might almost say, that Morality begins; here at least it takes an altogether new form, and on every side, as in living growth, expands itself. The Duties of Man to himself, to what is Highest in himself, make but the First Table of the Law: to the First Table is now superadded a Second, with the Duties of Man to his Neighbour; whereby also the significance of the First now assumes its true importance. Man has joined himself with man; soul acts and reacts on soul; a mystic miraculous unfathomable Union establishes itself; Life, in all its elements, has become intensated, consecrated. The lightning-spark of Thought, generated, or say rather heaven-kindled, in the solitary mind, awakens its express likeness in another mind, in a thousand other minds, and all blaze-up together in combined fire; reverberated from mind to mind, fed also with fresh fuel in each, it acquires incalculable new light as Thought, incalculable new heat as converted into Action. By and by, a common store of Thought can accumulate, and be transmitted as an everlasting possession: Literature, whether as preserved in the memory of Bards, in Runes and Hieroglyphs engraved on stone, or in Books of written or printed paper, comes into existence, and begins to play its wondrous part. Polities are formed; the weak submitting to the strong; with a willing loyalty, giving obedience that he may receive guidance: or say rather, in honour of our nature, the ignorant submitting to the wise; for so it is in all even the rudest communities, man never yields himself wholly to brute Force, but always to moral Greatness; thus the universal title of respect, from the Oriental *Sheik*, from the *Sachem* of the Red Indians, down to our English *Sir*, implies only that he whom we mean to honour is our *senior*. Last, as the crown and all-

supporting keystone of the fabric, Religion arises. The devout meditation of the isolated man, which flitted through his soul, like a transient tone of Love and Awe from unknown lands, acquires certainty, continuance, when it is shared-in by his brother men. 'Where two or three are gathered together' in the name of the Highest, then first does the Highest, as it is written, 'appear among them to bless them;' then first does an Altar and act of united Worship open a way from Earth to Heaven; whereon, were it but a simple Jacob's-ladder, the heavenly Messengers will travel, with glad tidings and unspeakable gifts for men. Such is SOCIETY, the vital articulation of many individuals into a new collective individual: greatly the most important of man's attainments on this earth; that in which, and by virtue of which, all his other attainments and attempts find their arena, and have their value. Considered well, Society is the standing wonder of our existence; a true region of the Supernatural; as it were, a second all-embracing Life, wherein our first individual Life becomes doubly and trebly alive, and whatever of Infinitude was in us bodies itself forth, and becomes visible and active.

To figure Society as endowed with life is scarcely a metaphor; but rather the statement of a fact by such imperfect methods as language affords. Look at it closely, that mystic Union, Nature's highest work with man, wherein man's volition plays an indispensable yet so subordinate a part, and the small Mechanical grows so mysteriously and indissolubly out of the infinite Dynamical, like Body out of Spirit,—is truly enough vital, what we can call vital, and bears the distinguishing character of life. In the same style also, we can say that Society has its periods of sickness and vigour, of youth, manhood, decrepitude, dissolution and new birth; in one or other of which stages we may, in all times, and all places where men inhabit, discern it; and do ourselves, in this time and place, whether as coöperating or as contending, as healthy members or as diseased ones, to our joy and sorrow, form part of it. The question, What is the actual condition of Society? has in these days unhappily become important enough. No one of us is unconcerned in that question; but for the majority of thinking men a true answer to it, such is the state of matters, appears almost as the one thing needful. Meanwhile, as the true

answer, that is to say, the complete and fundamental answer and settlement, often as it has been demanded, is nowhere forthcoming, and indeed by its nature is impossible, any honest approximation towards such is not without value. The feeblest light, or even so much as a more precise recognition of the darkness, which is the first step to attainment of light, will be welcome.

This once understood, let it not seem idle if we remark that here too our old Aphorism holds; that again in the Body Politic, as in the animal body, the sign of right performance is Unconsciousness. Such indeed is virtually the meaning of that phrase, 'artificial state of society,' as contrasted with the natural state, and indicating something so inferior to it. For, in all vital things, men distinguish an Artificial and a Natural; founding on some dim perception or sentiment of the very truth we here insist on: the artificial is the conscious, mechanical; the natural is the unconscious, dynamical. Thus, as we have an artificial Poetry, and prize only the natural; so likewise we have an artificial Morality, an artificial Wisdom, an artificial Society. The artificial Society is precisely one that knows its own structure, its own internal functions; not in watching, not in knowing which, but in working outwardly to the fulfilment of its aim, does the wellbeing of a Society consist. Every Society, every Polity, has a spiritual principle; is the embodiment, tentative and more or less complete, of an Idea: all its tendencies of endeavour, specialties of custom, its laws, politics and whole procedure (as the glance of some Montesquieu, across innumerable superficial entanglements, can partly decipher), are prescribed by an Idea, and flow naturally from it, as movements from the living source of motion. This Idea, be it of devotion to a man or class of men, to a creed, to an institution, or even, as in more ancient times, to a piece of land, is ever a true Loyalty; has in it something of a religious, paramount, quite infinite character; it is properly the Soul of the State, its Life; mysterious as other forms of Life, and like these working secretly, and in a depth beyond that of consciousness.

Accordingly, it is not in the vigorous ages of a Roman Republic that Treatises of the Commonwealth are written: while the Decii are rushing with devoted bodies on the enemies of Rome, what need of preaching Patriotism? The virtue of Pa-

triotism has already sunk from its pristine all-transcendent condition, before it has received a name. So long as the Commonwealth continues rightly athletic, it cares not to dabble in anatomy. Why teach obedience to the Sovereign; why so much as admire it, or separately recognise it, while a divine idea of Obedience perennially inspires all men? Loyalty, like Patriotism, of which it is a form, was not praised till it had begun to decline; the *Preux Chevaliers* first became rightly admirable, when 'dying for their king' had ceased to be a habit with chevaliers. For if the mystic significance of the State, let this be what it may, dwells vitally in every heart, encircles every life as with a second higher life, how should it stand self-questioning? It must rush outward, and express itself by works. Besides, if perfect, it is there as by necessity, and does not excite inquiry: it is also by nature infinite, has no limits; therefore can be circumscribed by no conditions and definitions; cannot be reasoned of; except *musically*, or in the language of Poetry, cannot yet so much as be spoken of.

In those days, Society was what we name healthy, sound at heart. Not indeed without suffering enough; not without perplexities, difficulty on every side: for such is the appointment of man; his highest and sole blessedness is, that he toil, and know what to toil at: not in ease, but in united victorious labour, which is at once evil and the victory over evil, does his Freedom lie. Nay often, looking no deeper than such superficial perplexities of the early Time, historians have taught us that it was all one mass of contradiction and disease; and in the antique Republic or feudal Monarchy have seen only the confused chaotic quarry, not the robust labourer, or the stately edifice he was building of it.

If Society, in such ages, had its difficulty, it had also its strength; if sorrowful masses of rubbish so encumbered it, the tough sinews to hurl them aside, with indomitable heart, were not wanting. Society went along without complaint; did not stop to scrutinise itself, to say, How well I perform! or, Alas, how ill! Men did not yet feel themselves to be 'the envy of surrounding nations;' and were enviable on that very account. Society was what we can call *whole*, in both senses of the word. The individual man was in himself a whole, or complete union; and could combine with his fellows as the living member of a

greater whole. For all men, through their life, were animated by one great Idea; thus all efforts pointed one way, everywhere there was *wholeness*. Opinion and Action had not yet become disunited; but the former could still produce the latter, or attempt to produce it; as the stamp does its impression while the wax is not hardened. Thought and the voice of thought were also a unison; thus, instead of Speculation, we had Poetry; Literature, in its rude utterance, was as yet a heroic Song, perhaps too a devotional Anthem.

Religion was everywhere; Philosophy lay hid under it, peaceably included in it. Herein, as in the life-centre of all, lay the true health and oneness. Only at a later era must Religion split itself into Philosophies; and thereby, the vital union of Thought being lost, disunion and mutual collision in all provinces of Speech and Action more and more prevail. For if the Poet, or Priest, or by whatever title the inspired thinker may be named, is the sign of vigour and wellbeing; so likewise is the Logician, or uninspired thinker, the sign of disease, probably of decrepitude and decay. Thus, not to mention other instances, one of them much nearer hand,—so soon as Prophecy among the Hebrews had ceased, then did the reign of Argumentation begin; and the ancient Theocracy, in its Sadduceeisms and Phariseeisms, and vain jangling of sects and doctors, give token that the *soul* of it had fled, and that the *body* itself, by natural dissolution, 'with the old forces still at work, but working in reverse order,' was on the road to final disappearance.

We might pursue this question into innumerable other ramifications; and everywhere, under new shapes, find the same truth, which we here so imperfectly enunciate, disclosed; that throughout the whole world of man, in all manifestations and performances of his nature, outward and inward, personal and social, the Perfect, the Great is a mystery to itself, knows not itself; whatsoever does know itself is already little, and more or less imperfect. Or otherwise, we may say, Unconsciousness belongs to pure unmixed life; Consciousness to a diseased mixture and conflict of life and death: Unconsciousness is the sign of creation; Consciousness, at best, that of manufacture. So deep, in this existence of ours, is the significance of Mystery.

Well might the Ancients make Silence a god; for it is the element of all godhood, infinitude, or transcendental greatness; at once the source and the ocean wherein all such begins and ends. In the same sense, too, have Poets sung 'Hymns to the Night;' as if Night were nobler than Day; as if Day were but a small motley-coloured veil spread transiently over the infinite bosom of Night, and did but deform and hide from us its purely transparent eternal deeps. So likewise have they spoken and sung as if Silence were the grand epitome and complete sum-total of all Harmony; and Death, what mortals call Death, properly the beginning of Life. Under such figures, since except in figures there is no speaking of the Invisible, have men endeavoured to express a great Truth;—a Truth, in our Times, as nearly as is perhaps possible, forgotten by the most; which nevertheless continues forever true, forever all-important, and will one day, under new figures, be again brought home to the bosoms of all.

But indeed, in a far lower sense, the rudest mind has still some intimation of the greatness there is in Mystery. If Silence was made a god of by the Ancients, he still continues a government-clerk among us Moderns. To all quacks, moreover, of what sort soever, the effect of Mystery is well known: here and there some Cagliostro, even in latter days, turns it to notable account: the blockhead also, who is ambitious, and has no talent, finds sometimes in 'the talent of silence,' a kind of succedaneum. Or again, looking on the opposite side of the matter, do we not see, in the common understanding of mankind, a certain distrust, a certain contempt of what is altogether self-conscious and mechanical? As nothing that is wholly seen through has other than a trivial character; so anything professing to be great, and yet wholly to see through itself, is already known to be false, and a failure. The evil repute your 'theoretical men' stand in, the acknowledged inefficiency of 'paper constitutions,' and all that class of objects, are instances of this. Experience often repeated, and perhaps a certain instinct of something far deeper that lies under such experiences, has taught men so much. They know beforehand, that the loud is generally the insignificant, the empty. Whatsoever can proclaim itself from the house-tops may be fit for the hawker, and for those multitudes that must needs buy of

him; but for any deeper use, might as well continue unproclaimed. Observe too, how the converse of the proposition holds; how the insignificant, the empty, is usually the loud; and, after the manner of a drum, is loud even because of its emptiness. The uses of some Patent Dinner Calefactor can be bruited abroad over the whole world in the course of the first winter; those of the Printing Press are not so well seen into for the first three centuries: the passing of the Select-Vestries Bill raises more noise and hopeful expectancy among mankind than did the promulgation of the Christian Religion. Again, and again, we say, the great, the creative and enduring is ever a secret to itself; only the small, the barren and transient is otherwise.

If we now, with a practical medical view, examine, by this same test of Unconsciousness, the Condition of our own Era, and of man's Life therein, the diagnosis we arrive at is nowise of a flattering sort. The state of Society in our days is, of all possible states, the least an unconscious one: this is specially the Era when all manner of Inquiries into what was once the unfelt, involuntary sphere of man's existence, find their place, and, as it were, occupy the whole domain of thought. What, for example, is all this that we hear, for the last generation or two, about the Improvement of the Age, the Spirit of the Age, Destruction of Prejudice, Progress of the Species, and the March of Intellect, but an unhealthy state of self-sentience, self-survey; the precursor and prognostic of still worse health? That Intellect do march, if possible at double-quick time, is very desirable; nevertheless, why should she turn round at every stride, and cry: See you what a stride I have taken! Such a marching of Intellect is distinctly of the spavined kind; what the Jockeys call 'all action and no go.' Or at best, if we examine well, it is the marching of that gouty Patient, whom his Doctors had clapt on a metal floor artificially heated to the searing point, so that he was obliged to march, and did march with a vengeance—nowhither. Intellect did not awaken for the first time yesterday; but has been under way from Noah's Flood downwards: greatly her best progress, moreover, was in the old times, when she said nothing about it. In those same 'dark ages,' Intellect (metaphorically as well as literally) could invent

glass, which now she has enough ado to grind into *spectacles*. Intellect built not only Churches, but a Church, *the* Church, based on this firm Earth, yet reaching up, and leading up, as high as Heaven ; and now it is all she can do to keep its doors bolted, that there be no tearing of the Surplices, no robbery of the Alms-box. She built a Senate-house likewise, glorious in its kind ; and now it costs her a well-nigh mortal effort to sweep it clear of vermin, and get the roof made rain-tight.

But the truth is, with Intellect, as with most other things, we are now passing from that first or boastful stage of Self-sentience into the second or painful one : out of these often-asseverated declarations that 'our system is in high order,' we come now, by natural sequence, to the melancholy conviction that it is altogether the reverse. Thus, for instance, in the matter of Government, the period of the 'Invaluable Constitution' has to be followed by a Reform Bill ; to laudatory De Lolmes succeed objurgatory Benthams. At any rate, what Treatises on the Social Contract, on the Elective Franchise, the Rights of Man, the Rights of Property, Codifications, Institutions, Constitutions, have we not, for long years, groaned under ! Or again, with a wider survey, consider those Essays on Man, Thoughts on Man, Inquiries concerning Man ; not to mention Evidences of the Christian Faith, Theories of Poetry, Considerations on the Origin of Evil, which during the last century have accumulated on us to a frightful extent. Never since the beginning of Time was there, that we hear or read of, so intensely self-conscious a Society. Our whole relations to the Universe and to our fellow-man have become an Inquiry, a Doubt ; nothing will go on of its own accord, and do its function quietly ; but all things must be probed into, the whole working of man's world be anatomically studied. Alas, anatomically studied, that it may be medically aided ! Till at length indeed, we have come to such a pass, that except in this same *medicine*, with its artifices and appliances, few can so much as imagine any strength or hope to remain for us. The whole Life of Society must now be carried on by drugs : doctor after doctor appears with his nostrum, of Coöperative Societies, Universal Suffrage, Cottage-and-Cow systems, Repression of Population, Vote by Ballot. To such height has the dyspepsia of Society reached ; as indeed the constant grinding

internal pain, or from time to time the mad spasmodic throes, of all Society do otherwise too mournfully indicate.

Far be it from us to attribute, as some unwise persons do, the disease itself to this unhappy sensation that there is a disease! The Encyclopedists did not produce the troubles of France; but the troubles of France produced the Encyclopedists, and much else. The Self-consciousness is the symptom merely; nay, it is also the attempt towards cure. We record the fact, without special censure; not wondering that Society should feel itself, and in all ways complain of aches and twinges, for it has suffered enough. Napoleon was but a Job's-comforter, when he told his wounded Staff-officer, twice unhorsed by cannon-balls, and with half his limbs blown to pieces: "*Vous vous écoutez trop!*"

On the outward, as it were Physical diseases of Society, it were beside our purpose to insist here. These are diseases which he who runs may read; and sorrow over, with or without hope. Wealth has accumulated itself into masses; and Poverty, also in accumulation enough, lies impassably separated from it; opposed, uncommunicating, like forces in positive and negative poles. The gods of this lower world sit aloft on glittering thrones, less happy than Epicurus's gods, but as indolent, as impotent; while the boundless living chaos of Ignorance and Hunger welters terrific, in its dark fury, under their feet. How much among us might be likened to a whited sepulchre; outwardly all pomp and strength; but inwardly full of horror and despair and dead-men's bones! Iron highways, with their wains fire-winged, are uniting all ends of the firm Land; quays and moles, with their innumerable stately fleets, tame the Ocean into our pliant bearer of burdens; Labour's thousand arms, of sinew and of metal, all-conquering everywhere, from the tops of the mountain down to the depths of the mine and the caverns of the sea, ply unweariedly for the service of man: yet man remains unserved. He has subdued this Planet, his habitation and inheritance; yet reaps no profit from the victory.

Sad to look upon: in the highest stage of civilisation, nine tenths of mankind have to struggle in the lowest battle of savage or even animal man, the battle against Famine. Countries are rich, prosperous in all manner of increase, beyond example:

but the Men of those countries are poor, needier than ever of all sustenance outward and inward; of Belief, of Knowledge, of Money, of Food. The rule, *Sic vos non vobis*, never altogether to be got rid of in men's Industry, now presses with such incubus weight, that Industry must shake it off, or utterly be strangled under it; and, alas, can as yet but gasp and rave, and aimlessly struggle, like one in the final deliration. Thus Change, or the inevitable approach of Change, is manifest everywhere. In one Country we have seen lava-torrents of fever-frenzy envelop all things; Government succeed Government, like the phantasms of a dying brain. In another Country, we can even now see, in maddest alternation, the Peasant governed by such guidance as this: To labour earnestly one month in raising wheat, and the next month labour earnestly in burning it. So that Society, were it not by nature immortal, and its death ever a new-birth, might appear, as it does in the eyes of some, to be sick to dissolution, and even now writhing in its last agony. Sick enough we must admit it to be, with disease enough, a whole nosology of diseases; wherein he perhaps is happiest that is not called to prescribe as physician;—wherein, however, one small piece of policy, that of summoning the Wisest in the Commonwealth, by the sole method yet known or thought of, to come together and with their whole soul consult for it, might, but for late tedious experiences, have seemed unquestionable enough.

But leaving this, let us rather look within, into the Spiritual condition of Society, and see what aspects and prospects offer themselves there. For after all, it is there properly that the secret and origin of the whole is to be sought: the Physical derangements of Society are but the image and impress of its Spiritual; while the heart continues sound, all other sickness is superficial, and temporary. False Action is the fruit of false Speculation; let the spirit of Society be free and strong, that is to say, let true Principles inspire the members of Society, then neither can disorders accumulate in its Practice; each disorder will be promptly, faithfully inquired into, and remedied as it arises. But alas, with us the Spiritual condition of Society is no less sickly than the Physical. Examine man's internal world, in any of its social relations and performances, here too all seems diseased self-consciousness, collision and mutually-

destructive struggle. Nothing acts from within outwards in undivided healthy force; everything lies impotent, lamed, its force turned inwards, and painfully 'listens to itself.'

To begin with our highest Spiritual function, with Religion, we might ask, Whither has Religion now fled? Of Churches and their establishments we here say nothing; nor of the unhappy domains of Unbelief, and how innumerable men, blinded in their minds, have grown to 'live without God in the world;' but, taking the fairest side of the matter, we ask, What is the nature of that same Religion, which still lingers in the hearts of the few who are called, and call themselves, specially the Religious? Is it a healthy religion, vital, unconscious of itself; that shines forth spontaneously in doing of the Work, or even in preaching of the Word? Unhappily, no. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, and inspired and soul-inspiring Eloquence, whereby Religion itself were brought home to our living bosoms, to live and reign there, we have 'Discourses on the Evidences,' endeavouring, with smallest result, to make it probable that such a thing as Religion exists. The most enthusiastic Evangelicals do not preach a Gospel, but keep describing how it should and might be preached: to awaken the sacred fire of faith, as by a sacred contagion, is not their endeavour; but, at most, to describe how Faith shows and acts, and scientifically distinguish true Faith from false. Religion, like all else, is conscious of itself, listens to itself; it becomes less and less creative, vital; more and more mechanical. Considered as a whole, the Christian Religion of late ages has been continually dissipating itself into Metaphysics; and threatens now to disappear, as some rivers do, in deserts of barren sand.

Of Literature, and its deep-seated, wide-spread maladies, why speak? Literature is but a branch of Religion, and always participates in its character: however, in our time, it is the only branch that still shows any greenness; and, as some think, must one day become the main stem. Now, apart from the subterranean and tartarean regions of Literature; — leaving out of view the frightful, scandalous statistics of Puffing, the mystery of Slander, Falsehood, Hatred and other convulsion-work of rabid Imbecility, and all that has rendered Literature on that side a perfect 'Babylon the mother of Abominations,' in very deed making the world 'drunk' with the wine of her

iniquity;—forgetting all this, let us look only to the regions of the upper air; to such Literature as can be said to have some attempt towards truth in it, some tone of music, and if it be not poetical, to hold of the poetical. Among other characteristics, is not this manifest enough: that it knows itself? Spontaneous devotedness to the object, being wholly possessed by the object, what we can call Inspiration, has well-nigh ceased to appear in Literature. Which melodious Singer forgets that he is singing melodiously? We have not the love of greatness, but the love of the love of greatness. Hence infinite Affectations, Distractions; in every case inevitable Error. Consider, for one example, this peculiarity of Modern Literature, the sin that has been named View-hunting. In our elder writers, there are no paintings of scenery for its own sake; no euphuistic gallantries with Nature, but a constant heartlove for her, a constant dwelling in communion with her. View-hunting, with so much else that is of kin to it, first came decisively into action through the *Sorrows of Werter;* which wonderful Performance, indeed, may in many senses be regarded as the progenitor of all that has since become popular in Literature; whereof, in so far as concerns spirit and tendency, it still offers the most instructive image; for nowhere, except in its own country, above all in the mind of its illustrious Author, has it yet fallen wholly obsolete. Scarcely ever, till that late epoch, did any worshipper of Nature become entirely aware that he was worshipping, much to his own credit; and think of saying to himself: Come, let us make a description! Intolerable enough: when every puny whipster plucks out his pencil, and insists on painting you a scene; so that the instant you discern such a thing as 'wavy outline,' 'mirror of the lake,' 'stern headland,' or the like, in any Book, you tremulously hasten on; and scarcely the Author of Waverley himself can tempt you not to skip.

Nay, is not the diseased self-conscious state of Literature disclosed in this one fact, which lies so near us here, the prevalence of Reviewing! Sterne's wish for a reader 'that would 'give-up the reins of his imagination into his author's hands, 'and be pleased he knew not why, and cared not wherefore,' might lead him a long journey now. Indeed, for our best class of readers, the chief pleasure, a very stinted one, is this same knowing of the Why; which many a Kames and Bossu has been,

ineffectually enough, endeavouring to teach us: till at last these also have laid down their trade; and now your Reviewer is a mere *taster;* who tastes, and says, by the evidence of such palate, such tongue, as he has got, It is good, It is bad. Was it thus that the French carried out certain inferior creatures on their Algerine Expedition, to taste the wells for them, and try whether they were poisoned? Far be it from us to disparage our own craft, whereby we have our living! Only we must note these things: that Reviewing spreads with strange vigour; that such a man as Byron reckons the Reviewer and the Poet equal; that at the last Leipzig Fair, there was advertised a Review of Reviews. By and by it will be found that all Literature has become one boundless self-devouring Review; and, as in London routs, we have to *do* nothing, but only to *see* others do nothing.—Thus does Literature also, like a sick thing, superabundantly 'listen to itself.'

No less is this unhealthy symptom manifest, if we cast a glance on our Philosophy, on the character of our speculative Thinking. Nay already, as above hinted, the mere existence and necessity of a Philosophy is an evil. Man is sent hither not to question, but to work: 'the end of man,' it was long ago written, 'is an Action, not a Thought.' In the perfect state, all Thought were but the picture and inspiring symbol of Action; Philosophy, except as Poetry and Religion, would have no being. And yet how, in this imperfect state, can it be avoided, can it be dispensed with? Man stands as in the centre of Nature; his fraction of Time encircled by Eternity, his handbreadth of Space encircled by Infinitude: how shall he forbear asking himself, What am I; and Whence; and Whither? How too, except in slight partial hints, in kind asseverations and assurances, such as a mother quiets her fretfully inquisitive child with, shall he get answer to such inquiries?

The disease of Metaphysics, accordingly, is a perennial one. In all ages, those questions of Death and Immortality, Origin of Evil, Freedom and Necessity, must, under new forms, anew make their appearance; ever, from time to time, must the attempt to shape for ourselves some Theorem of the Universe be repeated. And ever unsuccessfully: for what Theorem of the Infinite can the Finite render complete? We, the whole species of Mankind, and our whole existence and history, are but a

floating speck in the illimitable ocean of the All; yet *in* that ocean; indissoluble portion thereof; partaking of its infinite tendencies: borne this way and that by its deep-swelling tides, and grand ocean currents;—of which what faintest chance is there that we should ever exhaust the significance, ascertain the goings and comings? A region of Doubt, therefore, hovers forever in the background; in Action alone can we have certainty. Nay properly Doubt is the indispensable inexhaustible material whereon Action works, which Action has to fashion into Certainty and Reality; only on a canvas of Darkness, such is man's way of being, could the many-coloured picture of our Life paint itself and shine.

Thus if our eldest system of Metaphysics is as old as the *Book of Genesis*, our latest is that of Mr. Thomas Hope, published only within the current year. It is a chronic malady that of Metaphysics, as we said, and perpetually recurs on us. At the utmost, there is a better and a worse in it; a stage of convalescence, and a stage of relapse with new sickness: these forever succeed each other, as is the nature of all Life-movement here below. The first, or convalescent stage, we might also name that of Dogmatical or Constructive Metaphysics; when the mind constructively endeavours to scheme out and assert for itself an actual Theorem of the Universe, and therewith for a time rests satisfied. The second or sick stage might be called that of Sceptical or Inquisitory Metaphysics; when the mind having widened its sphere of vision, the existing Theorem of the Universe no longer answers the phenomena, no longer yields contentment; but must be torn in pieces, and certainty anew sought for in the endless realms of denial. All Theologies and sacred Cosmogonies belong, in some measure, to the first class; in all Pyrrhonism, from Pyrrho down to Hume and the innumerable disciples of Hume, we have instances enough of the second. In the former, so far as it affords satisfaction, a temporary anodyne to doubt, an arena for wholesome action, there may be much good; indeed in this case, it holds rather of Poetry than of Metaphysics, might be called Inspiration rather than Speculation. The latter is Metaphysics proper; a pure, unmixed, though from time to time a necessary evil.

For truly, if we look into it, there is no more fruitless endeavour than this same, which the Metaphysician proper toils

in: to educe Conviction out of Negation. How, by merely testing and rejecting what is not, shall we ever attain knowledge of what is? Metaphysical Speculation, as it begins in No or Nothingness, so it must needs end in Nothingness; circulates and must circulate in endless vortices; creating, swallowing—itself. Our being is made up of Light and Darkness, the Light resting on the Darkness, and balancing it; everywhere there is Dualism, Equipoise; a perpetual Contradiction dwells in us: 'where shall I place myself to escape from my own shadow?' Consider it well, Metaphysics is the attempt of the mind to rise above the mind; to environ and shut in, or as we say, *comprehend* the mind. Hopeless struggle, for the wisest, as for the foolishest! What strength of sinew, or athletic skill, will enable the stoutest athlete to fold his own body in his arms, and, by lifting, lift up *himself?* The Irish Saint swam the Channel, 'carrying his head in his teeth;' but the feat has never been imitated.

That this is the age of Metaphysics, in the proper, or sceptical Inquisitory sense; that there was a necessity for its being such an age, we regard as our indubitable misfortune. From many causes, the arena of free Activity has long been narrowing, that of sceptical Inquiry becoming more and more universal, more and more perplexing. The Thought conducts not to the Deed; but in boundless chaos, self-devouring, engenders monstrosities, phantasms, fire-breathing chimeras. Profitable Speculation were this: What is to be done; and How is it to be done? But with us not so much as the What can be got sight of. For some generations, all Philosophy has been a painful, captious, hostile question towards everything in the Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath: Why art thou there? Till at length it has come to pass that the worth and authenticity of all things seems dubitable or deniable: our best effort must be unproductively spent not in working, but in ascertaining our mere Whereabout, and so much as whether we are to work at all. Doubt, which, as was said, ever hangs in the background of our world, has now become our middleground and foreground; whereon, for the time, no fair Life-picture can be painted, but only the dark air-canvas itself flow round us, bewildering and benighting.

Nevertheless, doubt as we will, man is actually Here; not

to ask questions, but to do work: in this time, as in all times, it must be the heaviest evil for him, if his faculty of Action lie dormant, and only that of sceptical Inquiry exert itself. Accordingly, whoever looks abroad upon the world, comparing the Past with the Present, may find that the practical condition of man in these days is one of the saddest; burdened with miseries which are in a considerable degree peculiar. In no time was man's life what he calls a happy one; in no time can it be so. A perpetual dream there has been of Paradises, and some luxurious Lubberland, where the brooks should run wine, and the trees bend with ready-baked viands; but it was a dream merely; an impossible dream. Suffering, contradiction, error, have their quite perennial, and even indispensable abode in this Earth. Is not labour the inheritance of man? And what labour for the present is joyous, and not grievous? Labour, effort, is the very interruption of that ease, which man foolishly enough fancies to be his happiness; and yet without labour there were no ease, no rest, so much as conceivable. Thus Evil, what we call Evil, must ever exist while man exists: Evil, in the widest sense we can give it, is precisely the dark, disordered material out of which man's Freewill has to create an edifice of order and Good. Ever must Pain urge us to Labour; and only in free Effort can any blessedness be imagined for us.

But if man has, in all ages, had enough to encounter, there has, in most civilised ages, been an inward force vouchsafed him, whereby the pressure of things outward might be withstood. Obstruction abounded; but Faith also was not wanting. It is by Faith that man removes mountains: while he had Faith, his limbs might be wearied with toiling, his back galled with bearing; but the heart within him was peaceable and resolved. In the thickest gloom there burnt a lamp to guide him. If he struggled and suffered, he felt that it even should be so; knew for what he was suffering and struggling. Faith gave him an inward Willingness; a world of Strength wherewith to front a world of Difficulty. The true wretchedness lies here: that the Difficulty remain and the Strength be lost; that Pain cannot relieve itself in free Effort; that we have the Labour, and want the Willingness. Faith strengthens us, enlightens us, for all endeavours and endurances; with Faith we can do all, and dare all, and life itself has a thousand times been joyfully given away.

But the sum of man's misery is even this, that he feel himself crushed under the Juggernaut wheels, and know that Juggernaut is no divinity, but a dead mechanical idol.

Now this is specially the misery which has fallen on man in our Era. Belief, Faith has well-nigh vanished from the world. The youth on awakening in this wondrous Universe no longer finds a competent theory of its wonders. Time was, when if he asked himself, What is man, What are the duties of man? the answer stood ready written for him. But now the ancient 'ground-plan of the All' belies itself when brought into contact with reality; Mother Church has, to the most, become a superannuated Step-mother, whose lessons go disregarded; or are spurned at, and scornfully gainsaid. For young Valour and thirst of Action no ideal Chivalry invites to heroism, prescribes what is heroic: the old ideal of Manhood has grown obsolete, and the new is still invisible to us, and we grope after it in darkness, one clutching this phantom, another that; Werterism, Byronism, even Brummelism, each has its day. For Contemplation and love of Wisdom, no Cloister now opens its religious shades; the Thinker must, in all senses, wander homeless, too often aimless, looking up to a Heaven which is dead for him, round to an Earth which is deaf. Action, in those old days, was easy, was voluntary, for the divine worth of human things lay acknowledged; Speculation was wholesome, for it ranged itself as the handmaid of Action; what could not so range itself died out by its natural death, by neglect. Loyalty still hallowed obedience, and made rule noble; there was still something to be loyal to: the Godlike stood embodied under many a symbol in men's interests and business; the Finite shadowed forth the Infinite; Eternity looked through Time. The Life of man was encompassed and overcanopied by a glory of Heaven, even as his dwelling-place by the azure vault.

How changed in these new days! Truly may it be said, the Divinity has withdrawn from the Earth; or veils himself in that wide-wasting Whirlwind of a departing Era, wherein the fewest can discern his goings. Not Godhead, but an iron, ignoble circle of Necessity embraces all things; binds the youth of these times into a sluggish thrall, or else exasperates him into a rebel. Heroic Action is paralysed; for what worth now remains unquestionable with him? At the fervid period when his whole

nature cries aloud for Action, there is nothing sacred under whose banner he can act; the course and kind and conditions of free Action are all but undiscoverable. Doubt storms-in on him through every avenue; inquiries of the deepest, painfulest sort must be engaged with; and the invincible energy of young years waste itself in sceptical, suicidal cavillings; in passionate 'questionings of Destiny,' whereto no answer will be returned.

For men, in whom the old perennial principle of Hunger (be it Hunger of the poor Day-drudge who stills it with eighteenpence a-day, or of the ambitious Placehunter who can nowise still it with so little) suffices to fill-up existence, the case is bad; but not the worst. These men have an aim, such as it is; and can steer towards it, with chagrin enough truly; yet, as their hands are kept full, without desperation. Unhappier are they to whom a higher instinct has been given; who struggle to be persons, not machines; to whom the Universe is not a warehouse, or at best a fancy-bazaar, but a mystic temple and hall of doom. For such men there lie properly two courses open. The lower, yet still an estimable class, take up with worn-out Symbols of the Godlike; keep trimming and trucking between these and Hypocrisy, purblindly enough, miserably enough. A numerous intermediate class end in Denial; and form a theory that there is no theory; that nothing is certain in the world, except this fact of Pleasure being pleasant; so they try to realise what trifling modicum of Pleasure they can come at, and to live contented therewith, winking hard. Of these we speak not here; but only of the second nobler class, who also have dared to say No, and cannot yet say Yea; but feel that in the No they dwell as in a Golgotha, where life enters not, where peace is not appointed them.

Hard, for most part, is the fate of such men; the harder the nobler they are. In dim forecastings, wrestles within them the 'Divine Idea of the World,' yet will nowhere visibly reveal itself. They have to realise a Worship for themselves, or live unworshipping. The Godlike has vanished from the world; and they, by the strong cry of their soul's agony, like true wonder-workers, must again evoke its presence. This miracle is their appointed task; which they must accomplish, or die wretchedly: this miracle has been accomplished by such; but not in our land; our land yet knows not of it. Behold a Byron, in melo-

dious tones, 'cursing his day:' he mistakes earthborn passionate Desire for heaven-inspired Freewill; without heavenly loadstar, rushes madly into the dance of meteoric lights that hover on the mad Mahlstrom; and goes down among its eddies. Hear a Shelley filling the earth with inarticulate wail; like the infinite, inarticulate grief and weeping of forsaken infants. A noble Friedrich Schlegel, stupefied in that fearful loneliness, as of a silenced battle-field, flies back to Catholicism; as a child might to its slain mother's bosom, and cling there. In lower regions, how many a poor Hazlitt must wander on God's verdant earth, like the Unblest on burning deserts; passionately dig wells, and draw up only the dry quicksand; believe that he is seeking Truth, yet only wrestle among endless Sophisms, doing desperate battle as with spectre-hosts; and die and make no sign!

To the better order of such minds any mad joy of Denial has long since ceased: the problem is not now to deny, but to ascertain and perform. Once in destroying the False, there was a certain inspiration; but now the genius of Destruction has done its work, there is now nothing more to destroy. The doom of the Old has long been pronounced, and irrevocable; the Old has passed away: but, alas, the New appears not in its stead; the Time is still in pangs of travail with the New. Man has walked by the light of conflagrations, and amid the sound of falling cities; and now there is darkness, and long watching till it be morning. The voice even of the faithful can but exclaim: 'As yet struggles the twelfth hour of the Night: birds 'of darkness are on the wing, spectres uproar, the dead walk, 'the living dream.—Thou, Eternal Providence, wilt cause the 'day to dawn![2]

Such being the condition, temporal and spiritual, of the world at our Epoch, can we wonder that the world 'listens to itself,' and struggles and writhes, everywhere externally and internally, like a thing in pain? Nay, is not even this unhealthy action of the world's Organisation, if the symptom of universal disease, yet also the symptom and sole means of restoration and cure? The effort of Nature, exerting her medicative force to cast-out foreign impediments, and once more become One, become whole? In Practice, still more in Opinion, which is the precursor and prototype of Practice, there must needs be colli-

[2] Jean Paul's *Hesperus* (Vorrede).

sion, convulsion; much has to be ground away. Thought must needs be Doubt and Inquiry, before it can again be Affirmation and Sacred Precept. Innumerable 'Philosophies of Man,' contending in boundless hubbub, must annihilate each other, before an inspired Poesy and Faith for Man can fashion itself together.

From this stunning hubbub, a true Babel-like confusion of tongues, we have here selected two Voices; less as objects of praise or condemnation, than as signs how far the confusion has reached, what prospect there is of its abating. Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures* delivered at Dresden, and Mr. Hope's *Essay* published in London, are the latest utterances of European Speculation: far asunder in external place, they stand at a still wider distance in inward purport; are, indeed, so opposite and yet so cognate that they may, in many senses, represent the two Extremes of our whole modern system of Thought; and be said to include between them all the Metaphysical Philosophies, so often alluded to here, which, of late times, from France, Germany, England, have agitated and almost overwhelmed us. Both in regard to matter and to form, the relation of these two Works is significant enough.

Speaking first of their cognate qualities, let us remark, not without emotion, one quite extraneous point of agreement; the fact that the Writers of both have departed from this world; they have now finished their search, and had all doubts resolved: while we listen to the voice, the tongue that uttered it has gone silent forever. But the fundamental, all-pervading similarity lies in this circumstance, well worthy of being noted, that both these Philosophies are of the Dogmatic or Constructive sort: each in its way is a kind of Genesis; an endeavour to bring the Phenomena of man's Universe once more under some theoretic Scheme: in both there is a decided principle of unity; they strive after a result which shall be positive; their aim is not to question, but to establish. This, especially if we consider with what comprehensive concentrated force it is here exhibited, forms a new feature in such works.

Under all other aspects, there is the most irreconcilable opposition; a staring contrariety, such as might provoke contrasts, were there far fewer points of comparison. If Schlegel's Work

is the apotheosis of Spiritualism; Hope's again is the apotheosis of Materialism: in the one, all Matter is evaporated into a Phenomenon, and terrestrial Life itself, with its whole doings and showings, held out as a Disturbance (*Zerrüttung*) produced by the *Zeitgeist* (Spirit of Time); in the other, Matter is distilled and sublimated into some semblance of Divinity: the one regards Space and Time as mere forms of man's mind, and without external existence or reality; the other supposes Space and Time to be 'incessantly created,' and rayed-in upon us like a sort of 'gravitation.' Such is their difference in respect of purport: no less striking is it in respect of manner, talent, success and all outward characteristics. Thus, if in Schlegel we have to admire the power of Words, in Hope we stand astonished, it might almost be said, at the want of an articulate Language. To Schlegel his Philosophic Speech is obedient, dextrous, exact, like a promptly ministering genius; his names are so clear, so precise and vivid, that they almost (sometimes altogether) become things for him: with Hope there is no Philosophical Speech; but a painful, confused stammering, and struggling after such; or the tongue, as in doatish forgetfulness, maunders, low, long-winded, and speaks not the word intended, but another; so that here the scarcely intelligible, in these endless convolutions, becomes the wholly unreadable; and often we could ask, as that mad pupil did of his tutor in Philosophy, "But whether is Virtue a fluid, then, or a gas?" If the fact, that Schlegel, in the city of Dresden, could find audience for such high discourse, may excite our envy; this other fact, that a person of strong powers, skilled in English Thought and master of its Dialect, could write the *Origin and Prospects of Man,* may painfully remind us of the reproach, that England has now no language for Meditation; that England, the most calculative, is the least meditative, of all civilised countries.

It is not our purpose to offer any criticism of Schlegel's Book; in such limits as were possible here, we should despair of communicating even the faintest image of its significance. To the mass of readers, indeed, both among the Germans themselves, and still more elsewhere, it nowise addresses itself, and may lie forever sealed. We point it out as a remarkable document of the Time and of the Man; can recommend it,

moreover, to all earnest Thinkers, as a work deserving their best regard; a work full of deep meditation, wherein the infinite mystery of Life, if not represented, is decisively recognised. Of Schlegel himself, and his character, and spiritual history, we can profess no thorough or final understanding; yet enough to make us view him with admiration and pity, nowise with harsh contemptuous censure; and must say, with clearest persuasion, that the outcry of his being 'a renegade,' and so forth, is but like other such outcries, a judgment where there was neither jury, nor evidence, nor judge. The candid reader, in this Book itself, to say nothing of all the rest, will find traces of a high, far-seeing, earnest spirit, to whom 'Austrian Pensions,' and the Kaiser's crown, and Austria altogether, were but a light matter to the finding and vitally appropriating of Truth. Let us respect the sacred mystery of a Person; rush not irreverently into man's Holy of Holies! Were the lost little one, as we said already, found 'sucking its dead mother, on the field of carnage,' could it be other than a spectacle for tears? A solemn mournful feeling comes over us when we see this last Work of Friedrich Schlegel, the unwearied seeker, end abruptly in the middle; and, as if he *had not* yet found, as if emblematically of much, end with an '*Aber*—,' with a 'But—'! This was the last word that came from the Pen of Friedrich Schlegel: about eleven at night he wrote it down, and there paused sick; at one in the morning, Time for him had merged itself in Eternity; he was, as we say, no more.

Still less can we attempt any criticism of Mr. Hope's new Book of Genesis. Indeed, under any circumstances, criticism of it were now impossible. Such an utterance could only be responded to in peals of laughter; and laughter sounds hollow and hideous through the vaults of the dead. Of this monstrous Anomaly, where all sciences are heaped and huddled together, and the principles of all are, with a childlike innocence, plied hither and thither, or wholly abolished in case of need; where the First Cause is figured as a huge Circle, with nothing to do but radiate 'gravitation' towards its centre; and so construct a Universe, wherein all, from the lowest cucumber with its coolness, up to the highest seraph with his love, were but 'gravitation,' direct or reflex, 'in more or less central globes,'—what can we say, except, with sorrow and shame, that

it could have originated nowhere save in England? It is a general agglomerate of all facts, notions, whims and observations, as they lie in the brain of an English gentleman; as an English gentleman, of unusual thinking power, is led to fashion them, in his schools and in his world: all these thrown into the crucible, and if not fused, yet soldered or conglutinated with boundless patience; and now tumbled out here, heterogeneous, amorphous, unspeakable, a world's wonder. Most melancholy must we name the whole business; full of long-continued thought, earnestness, loftiness of mind; not without glances into the Deepest, a constant fearless endeavour after truth; and with all this nothing accomplished, but the perhaps absurdest Book written in our century by a thinking man. A shameful Abortion; which, however, need not now be smothered or mangled, for it is already dead; only, in our love and sorrowing reverence for the writer of *Anastasius*, and the heroic seeker of Light, though not bringer thereof, let it be buried and forgotten.

For ourselves, the loud discord which jars in these two Works, in innumerable works of the like import, and generally in all the Thought and Action of this period, does not any longer utterly confuse us. Unhappy who, in such a time, felt not, at all conjunctures, ineradicably in his heart the knowledge that a God made this Universe, and a Demon not! And shall Evil always prosper, then? Out of all Evil comes Good; and no Good that is possible but shall one day be real. Deep and sad as is our feeling that we stand yet in the bodeful Night; equally deep, indestructible is our assurance that the Morning also will not fail. Nay already, as we look round, streaks of a dayspring are in the east; it is dawning; when the time shall be fulfilled, it will be day. The progress of man towards higher and nobler developments of whatever is highest and noblest in him, lies not only prophesied to Faith, but now written to the eye of Observation, so that he who runs may read.

One great step of progress, for example, we should say, in actual circumstances, was this same; the clear ascertainment that we are in progress. About the grand Course of Providence, and his final Purposes with us, we can know nothing, or almost

nothing: man begins in darkness, ends in darkness; mystery is everywhere around us and in us, under our feet, among our hands. Nevertheless so much has become evident to every one, that this wondrous Mankind is advancing somewhither; that at least all human things are, have been and forever will be, in Movement and Change;—as, indeed, for beings that exist in Time, by virtue of Time, and are made of Time, might have been long since understood. In some provinces, it is true, as in Experimental Science, this discovery is an old one; but in most others it belongs wholly to these latter days. How often, in former ages, by eternal Creeds, eternal Forms of Government and the like, has it been attempted, fiercely enough, and with destructive violence, to chain the Future under the Past; and say to the Providence, whose ways with man are mysterious, and through the great deep: Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther! A wholly insane attempt; and for man himself, could it prosper, the frightfulest of all enchantments, a very Life-in-Death. Man's task here below, the destiny of every individual man, is to be in turns Apprentice and Workman; or say rather, Scholar, Teacher, Discoverer: by nature he has a strength for learning, for imitating; but also a strength for acting, for knowing on his own account. Are we not in a world seen to be Infinite; the relations lying closest together modified by those latest discovered and lying farthest asunder? Could you ever spell-bind man into a Scholar merely, so that he had nothing to discover, to correct; could you ever establish a Theory of the Universe that were entire, unimprovable, and which needed only to be got by heart; man then were spiritually defunct, the Species we now name Man had ceased to exist. But the gods, kinder to us than we are to ourselves, have forbidden such suicidal acts. As Phlogiston is displaced by Oxygen, and the Epicycles of Ptolemy by the Ellipses of Kepler; so does Paganism gives place to Catholicism, Tyranny to Monarchy, and Feudalism to Representative Government,—where also the process does not stop. Perfection of Practice, like completeness of Opinion, is always approaching, never arrived; Truth, in the words of Schiller, *immer wird, nie ist;* never *is*, always *is a-being*.

Sad, truly, were our condition did we know but this, that Change is universal and inevitable. Launched into a dark

shoreless sea of Pyrrhonism, what would remain for us but to sail aimless, hopeless; or make madly merry, while the devouring Death had not yet ingulfed us? As indeed, we have seen many, and still see many do. Nevertheless so stands it not. The venerator of the Past (and to what pure heart is the Past, in that 'moonlight of memory,' other than sad and holy?) sorrows not over its departure, as one utterly bereaved. The true Past departs not, nothing that was worthy in the Past departs; no Truth or Goodness realised by man ever dies, or can die; but is all still here, and, recognised or not, lives and works through endless changes. If all things, to speak in the German dialect, are discerned by us, and exist for us, in an element of Time, and therefore of Mortality and Mutability; yet Time itself reposes on Eternity: the truly Great and Transcendental has its basis and substance in Eternity; stands revealed to us as Eternity in a vesture of Time. Thus in all Poetry, Worship, Art, Society, as one form passes into another, nothing is lost: it is but the superficial, as it were the *body* only, that grows obsolete and dies; under the mortal body lies a *soul* which is immortal; which anew incarnates itself in fairer revelation; and the Present is the living sum-total of the whole Past.

In Change, therefore, there is nothing terrible, nothing supernatural: on the contrary, it lies in the very essence of our lot and life in this world. Today is not yesterday: we ourselves change; how can our Works and Thoughts, if they are always to be the fittest, continue always the same? Change, indeed, is painful; yet ever needful; and if Memory have its force and worth, so also has Hope. Nay, if we look well to it, what is all Derangement, and necessity of great Change, in itself such an evil, but the product simply of *increased resources* which the old *methods* can no longer administer; of new wealth which the old coffers will no longer contain? What is it, for example, that in our own day bursts asunder the bonds of ancient Political Systems, and perplexes all Europe with the fear of Change, but even this: the increase of social resources, which the old social methods will no longer sufficiently administer? The new omnipotence of the Steam-engine is hewing asunder quite other mountains than the physical. Have not our economical distresses, those barnyard Conflagrations them-

selves, the frightfulest madness of our mad epoch, their rise also in what is a real increase: increase of Men; of human Force; properly, in such a Planet as ours, the most precious of all increases? It is true again, the ancient methods of administration will no longer suffice. Must the indomitable millions, full of old Saxon energy and fire, lie cooped-up in this Western Nook, choking one another, as in a Blackhole of Calcutta, while a whole fertile untenanted Earth, desolate for want of the ploughshare, cries: Come and till me, come and reap me? If the ancient Captains can no longer yield guidance, new must be sought after: for the difficulty lies not in nature, but in artifice; the European Calcutta-Blackhole has no walls but air ones and paper ones.—So too, Scepticism itself, with its innumerable mischiefs, what is it but the sour fruit of a most blessed increase, that of Knowledge; a fruit too that will not always continue *sour?*

In fact, much as we have said and mourned about the unproductive prevalence of Metaphysics, it was not without some insight into the use that lies in them. Metaphysical Speculation, if a necessary evil, is the forerunner of much good. The fever of Scepticism must needs burn itself out, and burn out thereby the Impurities that caused it; then again will there be clearness, health. The principle of life, which now struggles painfully, in the outer, thin and barren domain of the Conscious or Mechanical, may then withdraw into its inner sanctuaries, its abysses of mystery and miracle; withdraw deeper than ever into that domain of the Unconscious, by nature infinite and inexhaustible; and creatively work there. From that mystic region, and from that alone, all wonders, all Poesies, and Religions, and Social Systems have proceeded: the like wonders, and greater and higher, lie slumbering there; and, brooded on by the spirit of the waters, will evolve themselves, and rise like exhalations from the Deep.

Of our Modern Metaphysics, accordingly, may not this already be said, that if they have produced no Affirmation, they have destroyed much Negation? It is a disease expelling a disease: the fire of Doubt, as above hinted, consuming away the Doubtful; that so the Certain come to light, and again lie visible on the surface. English or French Metaphysics, in reference to this last stage of the speculative process, are not

what we allude to here; but only the Metaphysics of the Germans. In France or England, since the days of Diderot and Hume, though all thought has been of a sceptico-metaphysical texture, so far as there was any Thought, we have seen no Metaphysics; but only more or less ineffectual questionings whether such could be. In the Pyrrhonism of Hume and the Materialism of Diderot, Logic had, as it were, overshot itself, overset itself. Now, though the athlete, to use our old figure, cannot, by much lifting, lift up his own body, he may shift it out of a laming posture, and get to stand in a free one. Such a service have German Metaphysics done for man's mind. The second sickness of Speculation has abolished both itself and the first. Friedrich Schlegel complains much of the fruitlessness, the tumult and transiency of German as of all Metaphysics; and with reason. Yet in that wide-spreading, deep-whirling vortex of Kantism, so soon metamorphosed into Fichteism, Schellingism, and then as Hegelism, and Cousinism, perhaps finally evaporated, is not this issue visible enough, That Pyrrhonism and Materialism, themselves necessary phenomena in European culture, have disappeared; and a Faith in Religion has again become possible and inevitable for the scientific mind; and the word *Free*-thinker no longer means the Denier or Caviller, but the Believer, or the Ready to believe? Nay, in the higher Literature of Germany, there already lies, for him that can read it, the beginning of a new revelation of the Godlike; as yet unrecognised by the mass of the world; but waiting there for recognition, and sure to find it when the fit hour comes. This age also is not wholly without its Prophets.

Again, under another aspect, if Utilitarianism, or Radicalism, or the Mechanical Philosophy, or by whatever name it is called, has still its long task to do; nevertheless we can now see through it and beyond it: in the better heads, even among us English, it has become obsolete; as in other countries, it has been, in such heads, for some forty or even fifty years. What sound mind among the French, for example, now fancies that men can be governed by 'Constitutions;' by the never so cunning mechanising of Self-interests, and all conceivable adjustments of checking and balancing; in a word, by the best possible solution of this quite insoluble and impossible problem, *Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their*

united action? Were not experiments enough of this kind tried before all Europe, and found wanting, when, in that doomsday of France, the infinite gulf of human Passion shivered asunder the thin rinds of Habit; and burst forth all-devouring, as in seas of Nether Fire? Which cunningly-devised 'Constitution,' constitutional, republican, democratic, sansculottic, could bind that raging chasm together? Were they not all burnt up, like paper as they were, in its molten eddies; and still the fire-sea raged fiercer than before? It is not by Mechanism, but by Religion; not by Self-interest, but by Loyalty, that men are governed or governable.

Remarkable it is, truly, how everywhere the eternal fact begins again to be recognised, that there is a Godlike in human affairs; that God not only made us and beholds us, but is in us and around us; that the Age of Miracles, as it ever was, now is. Such recognition we discern on all hands and in all countries: in each country after its own fashion. In France, among the younger nobler minds, strangely enough; where, in their loud contention with the Actual and Conscious, the Ideal or Unconscious is, for the time, without exponent; where Religion means not the parent of Polity, as of all that is highest, but Polity itself; and this and the other earnest man has not been wanting, who could audibly whisper to himself: "Go to, I will make a religion." In England still more strangely; as in all things, worthy England will have its way: by the shrieking of hysterical women, casting out of devils, and other 'gifts of the Holy Ghost.' Well might Jean Paul say, in this his twelfth hour of the Night, 'the living dream;' well might he say, 'the dead walk.' Meanwhile let us rejoice rather that so much has been seen into, were it through never so diffracting media, and never so madly distorted; that in all dialects, though but half-articulately, this high Gospel begins to be preached: Man is still Man. The genius of Mechanism, as was once before predicted, will not always sit like a choking incubus on our soul; but at length, when by a new magic Word the old spell is broken, become our slave, and as familiar-spirit do all our bidding. 'We are near awakening when we dream that we dream.'

He that has an eye and a heart can even now say: Why should I falter? Light has come into the world; to such as

love Light, so as Light must be loved, with a boundless all-doing, all-enduring love. For the rest, let that vain struggle to read the mystery of the Infinite cease to harass us. It is a mystery which, through all ages, we shall only read here a line of, there another line of. Do we not already know that the name of the Infinite is GOOD, is GOD? Here on Earth we are as Soldiers, fighting in a foreign land; that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no need to understand it; seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like Soldiers; with submission, with courage, with a heroic joy. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' Behind us, behind each one of us, lie Six Thousand Years of human effort, human conquest: before us is the boundless Time, with its as yet uncreated and unconquered Continents and Eldorados, which we, even we, have to conquer, to create; and from the bosom of Eternity there shine for us celestial guiding stars.

'My inheritance how wide and fair!
Time is my fair seed-field, of Time I'm heir.'

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.[1]

[1832.]

READER! thou here beholdest the Eidolon of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. So looks and lives, now in his eighty-third year, afar in the bright little friendly circle of Weimar, 'the clearest, most universal man of his time.' Strange enough is the cunning that resides in the ten fingers, especially what they bring to pass by pencil and pen! Him who never saw England, England now sees: from Fraser's 'Gallery' he looks forth here, wondering, doubtless, how *he* came into such a '*Lichtstrasse*, lightstreet,' or galaxy; yet with kind recognition of all neighbours, even as the moon looks kindly on lesser lights, and, were they but fish-oil cressets, or terrestrial Vauxhall stars (of clipped tin), forbids not their shining.—Nay, the very soul of the man thou canst likewise behold. Do but look well in those forty volumes of 'musical wisdom,' which, under the title of *Goethes Werke*, Cotta of Tübingen, or Black and Young of Covent Garden,—once offer them a trifle of drink-money,—will cheerfully hand thee: greater sight, or more profitable, thou wilt not meet with in this generation. The German language, it is presumable, thou knowest; if not, shouldst thou undertake the study thereof for that sole end, it were well worth thy while.

Croquis, a man otherwise of rather satirical turn, surprises us, on this occasion, with a fit of enthusiasm. He declares often, that here is the finest of all living heads; speaks much of blended passion and repose; serene depths of eyes; the brow, the temples, royally arched, a very palace of thought;—and so forth.

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 26.—By Stieler of Munich: the copy in *Fraser's Magazine* proved a total failure and involuntary caricature,—resembling, as was said at the time, a wretched old clothesman carrying behind his back a hat which he seemed to have stolen.

The Writer of these Notices is not without decision of character, and can believe what he knows. He answers Brother Croquis, that it is no wonder the head should be royal and a palace ; for a most royal work was appointed to be done therein. Reader! within that head the whole world lies mirrored, in such clear ethereal harmony as it has done in none since Shakspeare left us : even *this* rag-fair of a world, wherein thou painfully strugglest, and (as is like) stumblest,—all lies transfigured here, and revealed authentically to be still holy, still divine. What alchemy was that : to find a mad universe full of scepticism, discord, desperation ; and *transmute* it into a wise universe of belief, and melody, and reverence! Was not *there* an *opus magnum*, if one ever was? This, then, is he who, heroically doing and enduring, has accomplished it.

In this distracted Time of ours, wherein men have lost their old loadstars, and wandered after night-fires and foolish will-o'-wisps ; and all things, in that 'shaking of the nations,' have been tumbled into chaos, the high made low, and the low high; and ever and anon some duke of this, and king of that, is gurgled aloft, to float there for moments ; and fancies himself the governor and head-director of it all, and *is* but the topmost froth-bell, to burst again and mingle with the wild fermenting mass : in this so despicable Time, we say, there were nevertheless (be the bounteous Heavens ever thanked for it!) *two great men* sent among us. The one, in the island of St. Helena now sleeps 'dark and lone, amid the Ocean's everlasting lullaby;' the other still rejoices in the blessed sunlight, on the banks of the Ilme.

Great was the part allotted each, great the talent given him for the same; yet, mark the contrast! Bonaparte walked through the war-convulsed world like an all-devouring earthquake, heaving, thundering, hurling kingdom over kingdom; Goethe was as the mild-shining, inaudible Light, which, notwithstanding, can again make that Chaos into a Creation. Thus too, we see Napoleon, with his Austerlitzes, Waterloos and Borodinos, is quite gone; all departed, sunk to silence like a tavern-brawl. While this other!—*he* still shines with his direct radiance; his inspired words are to abide in living hearts, as the life and inspiration of thinkers, born and still unborn. Some fifty years hence, his thinking will be found translated, and ground down,

even to the capacity of the diurnal press; acts of parliament will be passed in virtue of him:—this man, if we will consider of it, is appointed to be ruler of the world.

Reader! to thee thyself, even now, he has one counsel to give, the secret of his whole poetic alchemy: GEDENKE ZU LEBEN. Yes, 'think of living'! Thy life, wert thou the 'pitifullest of all the sons of earth,' is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own; it is all thou hast to front eternity with. Work, then, even as he has done, and does,—'LIKE A STAR, UNHASTING, YET UNRESTING.'—*Sic valeas*,

DEATH OF GOETHE.[1]

[1832.]

In the Obituary of these days stands one article of quite peculiar import; the time, the place and particulars of which will have to be often repeated and re-written, and continue in remembrance many centuries: this namely, that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe died at Weimar, on the 22d March 1832. It was about eleven in the morning; 'he expired,' says the record, 'without any apparent suffering, having, a few minutes previ-'ously, called for paper for the purpose of writing, and ex-'pressed his delight at the arrival of spring.' A beautiful death; like that of a soldier found faithful at his post, and in the cold hand his arms still grasped! The Poet's last words are a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his last movement is to work at his appointed task. Beautiful; what we might call a Classic sacred-death; if it were not rather an Elijah-translation,—in a chariot, not of fire and terror, but of hope and soft vernal sunbeams! It was at Frankfort-on-Mayn, on the 28th of August 1749, that this man entered the world: and now, gently welcoming the birthday of his eighty-second spring, he closes his eyes, and takes farewell.

So, then, our Greatest has departed. That melody of life, with its cunning tones, which took captive ear and heart, has gone silent; the heavenly force that dwelt here victorious over so much, is here no longer; thus far, not farther, by speech and by act, shall the wise man utter himself forth. The End! What solemn meaning lies in that sound, as it peals mournfully through the soul, when a living friend has passed away! All now is closed, irrevocable; the changeful life-picture, growing daily into new coherence, under new touches and hues, has suddenly become completed and unchangeable; there as it lay, it is

[1] New Monthly Magazine, No. 138.

dipped, from this moment, in the æther of the heavens, and shines transfigured, to endure even so—forever. Time and Time's Empire; stern, wide-devouring, yet not without their grandeur! The week-day man, who was one of us, has put on the garment of Eternity, and become radiant and triumphant; the Present is all at once the Past; Hope is suddenly cut away, and only the backward vistas of Memory remain, shone on by a light that proceeds not from this earthly sun.

The death of Goethe, even for the many hearts that personally loved him, is not a thing to be lamented over; is to be viewed, in his own spirit, as a thing full of greatness and sacredness. For all men it is appointed once to die. To this man the full measure of a man's life had been granted, and a course and task such as to only a few in the whole generations of the world: what else could we hope or require but that now he should be called hence, and have leave to depart, having finished the work that was given him to do? If his course, as we may say of him more justly than of any other, was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. For indeed, as the material Sun is the eye and revealer of all things, so is Poetry, so is the World-Poet in a spiritual sense. Goethe's life too, if we examine it, is well represented in that emblem of a solar Day. Beautifully rose our summer sun, gorgeous in the red fervid east, scattering the spectres and sickly damps (of both of which there were enough to scatter); strong, benignant in his noonday clearness, walking triumphant through the upper realms; and now, mark also how he sets! '*So stirbt ein Held; anbetungsvoll*, So dies a hero; sight to be worshipped!'

And yet, when the inanimate material sun has sunk and disappeared, it will happen that we stand to gaze into the still-glowing west; and there rise great pale motionless clouds, like coulisses or curtains, to close the flame-theatre within; and then, in that death-pause of the Day, an unspeakable feeling will come over us: it is as if the poor sounds of Time, those hammerings of tired Labour on his anvils, those voices of simple men, had become awful and supernatural; as if in listening, we could hear them 'mingle with the everpealing tone of old Eternity.' In such moments the secrets of Life lie open to us; mysterious things flit over the soul; Life itself seems holier, wonderful and fearful. How much more when our sunset was of a living

sun; and *its* bright countenance and shining return to us, not on the morrow, but 'no more again, at all, forever'! In such a scene, silence, as over the mysterious great, is for him that has some feeling thereof the fittest mood. Nevertheless by silence the distant is not brought into communion; the feeling of each is without response from the bosom of his brother. There are now, what some years ago there were not, English hearts that know something of what those three words, 'Death of Goethe,' mean; to such men, among their many thoughts on the event, which are not to be translated into speech, may these few, through that imperfect medium, prove acceptable.

'Death,' says the Philosopher, 'is a commingling of Eter-'nity with Time; in the death of a good man, Eternity is seen 'looking through Time.' With such a sublimity here offered to eye and heart, it is not unnatural to look with new earnestness before and behind, and ask, What space in those years and æons of computed Time, this man with his activity may influence; what relation to the world of change and mortality, which the earthly name Life, he who is even now called to the Immortals has borne and may bear.

Goethe, it is commonly said, made a New Era in Literature; a Poetic Era began with him, the end or ulterior tendencies of which are yet nowise generally visible. This common saying is a true one; and true with a far deeper meaning than, to the most, it conveys. Were the Poet but a sweet sound and singer, solacing the ear of the idle with pleasant songs; and the new Poet one who could sing his idle pleasant song to a new air,—we should account him a small matter, and his performance small. But this man, it is not unknown to many, was a Poet in such a sense as the late generations have witnessed no other; as it is, in this generation, a kind of distinction to believe in the existence of, in the possibility of. The true Poet is ever, as of old, the Seer; whose eye has been gifted to discern the godlike Mystery of God's Universe, and decipher some new lines of its celestial writing; we can still call him a *Vates* and Seer; for he *sees* into this greatest of secrets, 'the open secret;' hidden things become clear; how the Future (both resting on Eternity) is but another phasis of the Present: thereby are his words in very truth prophetic; what he has spoken shall be done.

It begins now to be everywhere surmised that the real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. The Thought is parent of the Deed, nay is living soul of it, and last and continual, as well as first mover of it ; is the foundation and beginning and essence, therefore, of man's whole existence here below. In this sense, it has been said, the Word of man (the uttered Thought of man) is still a magic formula, whereby he rules the world. Do not the winds and waters, and all tumultuous powers, inanimate and animate, obey him ? A poor, quite mechanical Magician speaks ; and fire-winged ships cross the Ocean at his bidding. Or mark, above all, that 'raging of the nations,' wholly in contention, desperation and dark chaotic fury ; how the meek voice of a Hebrew Martyr and Redeemer stills it into order, and a savage Earth becomes kind and beautiful, and the habitation of horrid cruelty a temple of peace. The true Sovereign of the world, who moulds the world like soft wax, according to his pleasure, is he who lovingly *sees* into the world ; the 'inspired Thinker,' whom in these days we name Poet. The true Sovereign is the Wise Man.

However, as the Moon, which can heave-up the Atlantic, sends not in her obedient billows at once, but gradually; and the Tide, which swells today on our shores, and washes every creek, rose in the bosom of the great Ocean (astronomers assure us) eight-and-forty hours ago; and indeed, all world-movements, by nature deep, are by nature calm, and flow and swell onwards with a certain majestic slowness: so too with the Impulse of a Great Man, and the effect he has to manifest on other men. To such a one we may grant some generation or two, before the celestial Impulse he impressed on the world will universally proclaim itself, and become (like the working of the Moon) if still not intelligible, yet palpable, to all men ; some generation or two more, wherein it has to grow, and expand, and envelop all things, before it can reach its acme ; and thereafter mingling with other movements and new impulses, at length cease to require a specific observation or designation. Longer or shorter such period may be, according to the nature of the Impulse itself, and of the elements it works in ; according, above all, as the Impulse was intrinsically great and deep-reaching, or only wide-spread, superficial

and transient. Thus, if David Hume is at this hour pontiff of the world, and rules most hearts, and guides most tongues (the hearts and tongues even of those that in vain rebel against him), there are nevertheless symptoms that his task draws towards completion; and now in the distance his successor becomes visible. On the other hand, we have seen a Napoleon, like some gunpowder force (with which sort, indeed, he chiefly worked), explode his whole virtue suddenly, and thunder himself out and silent, in a space of five-and-twenty years. While again, for a man of true greatness, working with spiritual implements, two centuries is no uncommon period; nay, on this Earth of ours, there have been men whose Impulse had not completed its development till after fifteen hundred years, and might perhaps be seen still individually subsistent after two thousand.

But, as was once written, 'though our clock strikes when "there is a change from hour to hour, no hammer in the Ho-"rologe of Time peals through the Universe to proclaim that "there is a change from era to era.' The true Beginning is oftenest unnoticed and unnoticeable. Thus do men go wrong in their reckoning; and grope hither and thither, not knowing where they are, in what course their history runs. Within this last century, for instance, with its wild doings and destroyings, what hope, grounded on miscalculation, ending in disappointment! How many world-famous victories were gained and lost, dynasties founded and subverted, revolutions accomplished, constitutions sworn to; and ever the 'new era' was come, was coming, yet still it came not, but the time continued sick! Alas, all these were but spasmodic convulsions of the death-sick time: the crisis of cure and regeneration to the time was not there indicated. The real new era was when a Wise Man came into the world, with clearness of vision and greatness of soul to accomplish this old high enterprise, amid these new difficulties, yet again: A Life of Wisdom. Such a man became, by Heaven's pre-appointment, in very deed the Redeemer of the time. Did he not bear the curse of the time? He was filled full with its scepticism, bitterness, hollowness and thousandfold contradictions, till his heart was like to break; but he subdued all this, rose victorious over this, and manifoldly by word and act showed others that come after, how

to do the like. Honour to him who first 'through the impassable paves a road'! Such, indeed, is the task of every great man; nay of every good man in one or the other sphere, since goodness is greatness, and the good man, high or humble, is ever a martyr and 'spiritual hero that ventures forward into the gulf for our deliverance.' The gulf into which this man ventured, which he tamed and rendered habitable, was the greatest and most perilous of all, wherein truly all others lie included: *The whole distracted Existence of man is an age of Unbelief.* Whoso lives, whoso with earnest mind studies to live wisely in that mad element, may yet know, perhaps too well, what an enterprise was here; and for the Chosen Man of our time who could prevail in it, have the higher reverence, and a gratitude such as belongs to no other.

How far he prevailed in it, and by what means, with what endurances and achievements, will in due season be estimated. Those volumes called *Goethe's Works* will now receive no farther addition or alteration; and the record of his whole spiritual Endeavour lies written there,—were the man or men but ready that could read it rightly! A glorious record; wherein he who would understand himself and his environment, who struggles for escape out of darkness into light as for the one thing needful, will long thankfully study. For the whole chaotic Time, what it has suffered, attained and striven after, stands imaged there; interpreted, ennobled into poetic clearness. From the passionate longings and wailings of *Werter*, spoken as from the heart of all Europe; onwards through the wild unearthly melody of *Faust*, like the spirit-song of falling worlds; to that serenely smiling wisdom of *Meisters Lehrjahre*, and the *German Hafiz*,—what an interval; and all enfolded in an ethereal music, as from unknown spheres, harmoniously uniting all! A long interval; and wide as well as long; for this was a universal man. History, Science, Art, human Activity under every aspect; the laws of Light in his *Farbenlehre*; the laws of wild Italian Life in his *Benvenuto Cellini*;—nothing escaped him; nothing that he did not look into, that he did not see into. Consider, too, the genuineness of whatsoever he did; his hearty, idiomatic way; simplicity with loftiness, and nobleness, and aerial grace! Pure works of Art, completed with an antique Grecian polish, as *Torquato Tasso*,

as *Iphigenie;* Proverbs; *Xenien;* Patriarchal Sayings, which, since the Hebrew Scriptures were closed, we know not where to match; in whose homely depths lie often the materials for volumes.

To measure and estimate all this, as we said, the time is not come; a century hence will be the fitter time. He who investigates it best will find its meaning greatest, and be the readiest to acknowledge that it transcends him. Let the reader have *seen*, before he attempts to *oversee*. A poor reader, in the mean while, were he who discerned not here the authentic rudiments of that same New Era, whereof we have so often had false warning. Wondrously, the wrecks and pulverised rubbish of ancient things, institutions, religions, forgotten noblenesses, made alive again by the breath of Genius, lie here in new coherence and incipient union, the spirit of Art working creative through the mass; that *chaos*, into which the eighteenth century with its wild war of hypocrites and sceptics had reduced the Past, begins here to be once more a *world*.—This, the highest that can be said of written Books, is to be said of these: there is in them a New Time, the prophecy and beginning of a New Time. The corner-stone of a new social edifice for mankind is laid there; firmly, as before, on the natural rock: far-extending traces of a ground-plan we can also see; which future centuries may go on to enlarge, to amend and work into reality. These sayings seem strange to some; nevertheless they are not empty exaggerations, but expressions, in their way, of a belief, which is not now of yesterday; perhaps when Goethe has been read and meditated for another generation, they will not seem so strange.

Precious is the new light of Knowledge which our Teacher conquers for us; yet small to the new light of Love which also we derive from him: the most important element of any man's performance is the Life he has accomplished. Under the intellectual union of man and man, which works by precept, lies a holier union of affection, working by example; the influences of which latter, mystic, deep-reaching, all-embracing, can still less be computed. For Love is ever the beginning of Knowledge, as fire is of light; and works also more in the manner of *fire*. That Goethe was a great Teacher of men means already that he was a good man; that he had himself learned; in the

school of experience had striven and proved victorious. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeon of Unbelief (a true vacuum and nonentity), has the assurance that there was such a man, that such a man was still possible, come like tidings of great joy! He who would learn to reconcile reverence with clearness; to deny and defy what is False, yet believe and worship what is True; amid raging factions, bent on what is either altogether empty or has substance in it only for a day, which stormfully convulse and tear hither and thither a distracted expiring system of society, to adjust himself aright; and, working for the world and in the world, keep himself unspotted from the world,—let him look here. This man, we may say, became morally great, by being in his own age, what in some other ages many might have been, a genuine man. His grand excellency was this, that he was genuine. As his primary faculty, the foundation of all others, was Intellect, depth and force of Vision; so his primary virtue was Justice, was the courage to be just. A giant's strength we admired in him; yet, strength ennobled into softest mildness; even like that 'silent rock-bound strength of a world,' on whose bosom, which rests on the adamant, grow flowers. The greatest of hearts was also the bravest; fearless, unwearied, peacefully invincible. A completed man: the trembling sensibility, the wild enthusiasm of a Mignon can assort with the scornful world-mockery of a Mephistopheles; and each side of many-sided life receives its due from him.

Goethe reckoned Schiller happy that he died young, in the full vigour of his days; that we could 'figure him as a youth forever.' To himself a different, higher destiny was appointed. Through all the changes of man's life, onwards to its extreme verge he was to go; and through them all nobly. In youth, flatterings of fortune, uninterrupted outward prosperity cannot corrupt him; a wise observer has to remark: 'None but a 'Goethe, at the Sun of earthly happiness, can keep his phœnix-'wings unsinged.'—Through manhood, in the most complex relation, as poet, courtier, politician, man of business, man of speculation; in the middle of revolutions and counter-revolutions, outward and spiritual; with the world loudly for him, with the world loudly or silently against him; in all seasons and situations, he holds equally on his way. Old age itself,

which is called dark and feeble, he was to render lovely: who that looked upon him there, venerable in himself, and in the world's reverence ever the clearer, the purer, but could have prayed that he too were such an old man? And did not the kind Heavens continue kind, and grant to a career so glorious the worthiest end?

Such was Goethe's Life; such has his departure been. He sleeps now beside his Schiller and his Carl August of Weimar: so had the Prince willed it, that between these two should be his own final rest. In life they were united, in death they are not divided. The unwearied Workman now rests from his labours; the fruit of these is left growing, and to grow. His earthly years have been numbered and ended: but of his Activity, for it stood rooted in the Eternal, there is no end. All that we mean by the higher Literature of Germany, which is the higher Literature of Europe, already gathers round this man, as its creator; of which grand object, dawning mysterious on a world that hoped not for it, who is there that can measure the significance and far-reaching influences? The Literature of Europe will pass away; Europe itself, the Earth itself will pass away: this little life-boat of an Earth, with its noisy crew of a Mankind, and all their troubled History, will one day have vanished; faded like a cloud-speck from the azure of the All! What, then, is man! What, then, is man! He endures but for an hour, and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-element of Time; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more.

And now we turn back into the world, withdrawing from this new-made grave. The man whom we love lies there: but glorious, worthy; and his spirit yet lives in us with an authentic life. Could each here vow to do his little task, even as the Departed did his great one; in the manner of a true man, not for a Day, but for Eternity! To live, as he counselled and commanded, not commodiously in the Reputable, the Plausible, the Half, but resolutely in the Whole, the Good, the True:

'*Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben!*'

BIOGRAPHY.[1]

[1832.]

MAN'S sociality of nature evinces itself, in spite of all that can be said, with abundant evidence by this one fact, were there no other: the unspeakable delight he takes in Biography. It is written, 'The proper study of mankind is man;' to which study, let us candidly admit, he, by true or by false methods, applies himself, nothing loath. 'Man is perennially interesting to man; nay, if we look strictly to it, there is nothing else 'interesting.' How inexpressibly comfortable to know our fellow-creature; to see into him, understand his goings-forth, decipher the whole heart of his mystery: nay, not only to see into him, but even to see out of him, to view the world altogether as he views it; so that we can theoretically construe him, and could almost practically personate him; and do now thoroughly discern both what manner of man he is, and what manner of thing he has got to work on and live on!

A scientific interest and a poetic one alike inspire us in this matter. A scientific: because every mortal has a Problem of Existence set before him, which, were it only, what for the most it is, the Problem of keeping soul and body together, must be to a certain extent *original*, unlike every other; and yet, at the same time, so *like* every other; like our own, therefore; instructive, moreover, since we also are indentured to *live*. A poetic interest still more: for precisely this same struggle of human Freewill against material Necessity, which every man's Life, by the mere circumstance that the man continues alive, will more or less victoriously exhibit,—is that which above all

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 27 (for April).—*The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.; including a Tour to the Hebrides.* By James Boswell, Esq.—A new Edition, with numerous Additions and Notes, by John Wilson Croker, LL.D., F.R.S. 5 vols. London, 1831.

else, or rather inclusive of all else, calls the Sympathy of mortal hearts into action; and whether as acted, or as represented and written of, not only is Poetry, but is the sole Poetry possible. Borne onwards by which two all-embracing interests, may the earnest Lover of Biography expand himself on all sides, and indefinitely enrich himself. Looking with the eyes of every new neighbour, he can discern a new world different for each: feeling with the heart of every neighbour, he lives with every neighbour's life, even as with his own. Of these millions of living men, each individual is a mirror to us; a mirror both scientific and poetic; or, if you will, both natural and magical;—from which one would so gladly draw aside the gauze veil; and, peering therein, discern the image of his own natural face, and the supernatural secrets that prophetically lie under the same!

Observe, accordingly, to what extent, in the actual course of things, this business of Biography is practised and relished. Define to thyself, judicious Reader, the real significance of these phenomena, named Gossip, Egoism, Personal Narrative (miraculous or not), Scandal, Raillery, Slander, and suchlike; the sum-total of which (with some fractional addition of a better ingredient, generally too small to be noticeable) constitutes that other grand phenomenon still called 'Conversation.' Do they not mean wholly: *Biography* and *Autobiography?* Not only in the common Speech of men; but in all Art too, which is or should be the concentrated and conserved essence of what men can speak and show, Biography is almost the one thing needful.

Even in the highest works of Art, our interest, as the critics complain, is too apt to be strongly or even mainly of a Biographic sort. In the Art we can nowise forget the Artist: while looking on the *Transfiguration*, while studying the *Iliad*, we ever strive to figure to ourselves what spirit dwelt in Raphael; what a head was that of Homer, wherein, woven of Elysian light and Tartarean gloom, that old world fashioned itself together, of which these written Greek characters are but a feeble though perennial copy. The Painter and the Singer are present to us; we partially and for the time become the very Painter and the very Singer, while we enjoy the Picture and the Song. Perhaps too, let the critic say what he will, this is

the highest enjoyment, the clearest recognition, we can have of these. Art indeed is Art; yet Man also is Man. Had the *Transfiguration* been painted without human hand; had it grown merely on the canvas, say by atmospheric influences, as lichen-pictures do on rocks,—it were a grand Picture doubtless; yet nothing like so grand as *the* Picture, which, on opening our eyes, we everywhere in Heaven and in Earth see painted; and everywhere pass over with indifference, — because the Painter was not a Man. Think of this; much lies in it. The Vatican is great; yet poor to Chimborazo or the Peak of Teneriffe: its dome is but a foolish Big-endian or Little-endian chip of an egg-shell, compared with that star-fretted Dome where Arcturus and Orion glance forever; which latter, notwithstanding, who looks at, save perhaps some necessitous star-gazer bent to make Almanacs; some thick-quilted watchman, to see what weather it will prove? The Biographic interest is wanting: no Michael Angelo was He who built that 'Temple of Immensity;' therefore do we, pitiful Littlenesses as we are, turn rather to wonder and to worship in the little toybox of a Temple built by our like.

Still more decisively, still more exclusively does the Biographic interest manifest itself, as we descend into lower regions of spiritual communication; through the whole range of what is called Literature. Of History, for example, the most honoured, if not honourable species of composition, is not the whole purport Biographic? 'History,' it has been said, 'is the essence of innumerable Biographies.' Such, at least, it should be: whether it is, might admit of question. But, in any case, what hope have we in turning over those old interminable Chronicles, with their garrulities and insipidities; or still worse, in patiently examining those modern Narrations, of the Philosophic kind, where 'Philosophy, teaching by Experience,' has to sit like owl on housetop, *seeing* nothing, *understanding* nothing, uttering only, with such solemnity, her perpetual most wearisome *hoo-hoo*:—what hope have we, except the for most part fallacious one of gaining some acquaintance with our fellow-creatures, though dead and vanished, yet dear to us; how they got along in those old days, suffering and doing; to what extent, and under what circumstances, they resisted the Devil and triumphed over him, or struck their colours to him, and

were trodden under foot by him; how, in short, the perennial Battle went, which men name Life, which we also in these new days, with indifferent fortune, have to fight, and must bequeath to our sons and grandsons to go on fighting,—till the Enemy one day be quite vanquished and abolished, or else the great Night sink and part the combatants; and thus, either by some Millennium or some new Noah's Deluge, the Volume of Universal History wind itself up! Other hope, in studying such Books, we have none: and that it is a deceitful hope, who that has tried knows not? A feast of widest Biographic insight is spread for us; we enter full of hungry anticipations: alas, like so many other feasts, which Life invites us to, a mere Ossian's 'feast of *shells*,'—the food and liquor being all emptied out and clean gone, and only the vacant dishes and deceitful emblems thereof left! Your modern Historical Restaurateurs are indeed little better than high-priests of Famine; that keep choicest china dinner-sets, only no dinner to serve therein. Yet such is our Biographic appetite, we run trying from shop to shop, with ever new hope; and, unless we could eat the wind, with ever new disappointment.

Again, consider the whole class of Fictitious Narratives; from the highest category of epic or dramatic Poetry, in Shakspeare and Homer, down to the lowest of froth Prose in the Fashionable Novel. What are all these but so many mimic Biographies? Attempts, here by an inspired Speaker, there by an uninspired Babbler, to deliver himself, more or less ineffectually, of the grand secret wherewith all hearts labour oppressed: The significance of Man's Life;—which deliverance, even as traced in the unfurnished head, and printed at the Minerva Press, finds readers. For, observe, though there is *a* greatest Fool, as a superlative in every kind; and *the* most Foolish man in the Earth is now indubitably living and breathing, and did this morning or lately eat breakfast, and is even now digesting the same; and looks out on the world with his dim horn-eyes, and inwardly forms some unspeakable theory thereof: yet where shall the authentically Existing be personally met with! Can one of us, otherwise than by guess, know that we have got sight of him, have orally communed with him? To take even the narrower sphere of this our English Metropolis, can any one confidently say to himself, that he has con-

versed with the identical, individual Stupidest man now extant in London? No one. Deep as we dive in the Profound, there is ever a new depth opens: where the ultimate bottom may lie, through what new scenes of being we must pass before reaching it (except that we know it does lie somewhere, and might by human faculty and opportunity be reached), is altogether a mystery to us. Strange, tantalising pursuit! We have the fullest assurance, not only that there is a Stupidest of London men actually resident, with bed and board of some kind, in London; but that several persons have been or perhaps are now speaking face to face with him: while for us, chase it as we may, such scientific blessedness will too probably be forever denied!—But the thing we meant to enforce was this comfortable fact, that no known Head was so wooden, but there might be other heads to which it were a genius and Friar Bacon's Oracle. Of no given Book, not even of a Fashionable Novel, can you predicate with certainty that its vacuity is absolute; that there are not other vacuities which shall partially replenish themselves therefrom, and esteem it a *plenum*. How knowest thou, may the distressed Novelwright exclaim, that I, here where I sit, am the Foolishest of existing mortals; that this my Long-ear of a Fictitious Biography shall not find one and the other, into whose still longer ears it may be the means, under Providence, of instilling somewhat? We answer, None knows, none can certainly know: therefore, write on, worthy Brother, even as thou canst, even as it has been given thee.

Here, however, in regard to 'Fictitious Biographies,' and much other matter of like sort, which the greener mind in these days inditeth, we may as well insert some singular sentences on the importance and significance of *Reality*, as they stand written for us in Professor Gottfried Sauerteig's *Æsthetische Springwurzeln;* a Work, perhaps, as yet new to most English readers. The Professor and Doctor is not a man whom we can praise without reservation; neither shall we say that his *Springwurzeln* (a sort of magical picklocks, as he affectedly names them) are adequate to '*start*' every *bolt* that locks-up an æsthetic mystery: nevertheless, in his crabbed, one-sided way, he sometimes hits masses of the truth. We endeavour to translate faithfully, and trust the reader will find it worth serious perusal:

'The significance, even for poetic purposes,' says Sauerteig,

'that lies in REALITY is too apt to escape us; is perhaps only 'now beginning to be discerned. When we named *Rousseau's* 'Confessions an elegiaco-didactic Poem, we meant more than 'an empty figure of speech; we meant a historical scientific 'fact.

'Fiction, while the feigner of it knows that he is feigning, 'partakes, more than we suspect, of the nature of *lying;* and 'has ever an, in some degree, unsatisfactory character. All 'Mythologies were once Philosophies; were *believed:* the Epic 'Poems of old time, so long as they continued *epic*, and had 'any complete impressiveness, were Histories, and understood 'to be narratives of *facts*. In so far as Homer employed his 'gods as mere ornamental fringes, and had not himself, or at 'least did not expect his hearers to have, a belief that they 'were real agents in those antique doings; so far did he fail to 'be *genuine;* so far was he a partially *hollow* and false singer; 'and sang to please only a portion of man's mind, not the 'whole thereof.

'Imagination is, after all, but a poor matter when it has to 'part company with Understanding, and even front it hostilely 'in flat contradiction. Our mind is divided in twain: there 'is contest; wherein that which is weaker must needs come to 'the worse. Now of all feelings, states, principles, call it what 'you will, in man's mind, is not Belief the clearest, strongest; 'against which all others contend in vain? Belief is, indeed, 'the beginning and first condition of all spiritual Force what-'soever: only in so far as Imagination, were it but moment-'arily, is *believed*, can there be any use or meaning in it, any 'enjoyment of it. And what is momentary Belief? The en-'joyment of a moment. Whereas a perennial Belief were en-'joyment perennially, and with the whole united soul.

'It is thus that I judge of the Supernatural in an Epic 'Poem; and would say, the instant it has ceased to be authen-'tically supernatural, and become what you call "Machinery:" 'sweep it out of sight (*schaff' es mir vom Halse*)! Of a truth, 'that same "Machinery," about which the critics make such 'hubbub, was well named *Machinery;* for it is in very deed 'mechanical, nowise inspired or poetical. Neither for us is 'there the smallest æsthetic enjoyment in it; save only in this 'way; that we believe it *to have been believed*,—by the Singer

'or his Hearers; into whose case we now laboriously struggle 'to transport ourselves; and so, with stinted enough result, 'catch some reflex of the Reality, which for them was wholly 'real, and visible face to face. Whenever it has come so far 'that your "Machinery" is avowedly mechanical and unbe-'lieved,—what is it else, if we dare tell ourselves the truth, but 'a miserable, meaningless Deception, kept-up by old use and 'wont alone? If the gods of an *Iliad* are to us no longer au-'thentic Shapes of Terror, heart-stirring, heart-appalling, but 'only vague-glittering Shadows,—what must the dead Pagan 'gods of an *Epigoniad* be, the dead-living Pagan-Christian gods 'of a *Lusiad*, the concrete-abstract, evangelical-metaphysical 'gods of a *Paradise Lost?* Superannuated lumber! Cast 'raiment, at best; in which some poor mime, strutting and 'swaggering, may or may not set forth new noble Human Feel-'ings (again a Reality), and so secure, or not secure, our par-'don of such hoydenish masking; for which, in any case, he 'has a pardon to *ask*.

'True enough, none but the earliest Epic Poems can claim 'this distinction of entire credibility, of Reality: after an *Iliad*, 'a *Shaster*, a *Koran*, and other the like primitive performances, 'the rest seem, by this rule of mine, to be altogether excluded 'from the list. Accordingly, what *are* all the rest, from Virgil's '*Æneid* downwards, in comparison? Frosty, artificial, heteroge-'neous things; more of gumflowers than of roses; at the best, 'of the two mixed incoherently together: to some of which, 'indeed, it were hard to deny the title of Poems; yet to no 'one of which can that title belong in any sense even resem-'bling the old high one it, in those old days, conveyed,—when 'the epithet "divine" or "sacred" as applied to the uttered 'Word of man, was not a vain metaphor, a vain sound, but a 'real name with meaning. Thus, too, the farther we recede 'from those early days, when Poetry, as true Poetry is always, 'was still sacred or divine, and inspired (what ours, in great 'part, only pretends to be),—the more impossible becomes it 'to produce any, we say not true Poetry, but tolerable sem-'blance of such; the hollower, in particular, grow all manner 'of Epics; till at length, as in this generation, the very name 'of Epic sets men a-yawning, the announcement of a new Epic 'is received as a public calamity.

'But what if the *impossible* being once for all quite discarded, the *probable* be well adhered to: how stands it with fiction *then?* Why, then, I would say, the evil is much mended, but nowise completely cured. We have then, in place of the wholly dead modern Epic, the partially living modern Novel; to which latter it is much easier to lend that above mentioned, so essential "momentary credence" than to the former: indeed, infinitely easier; for the former being flatly incredible, no mortal *can* for a moment credit it, for a moment enjoy it. Thus, here and there, a *Tom Jones*, a *Meister*, a *Crusoe*, will yield no little solacement to the minds of men; though still immeasurably less than a *Reality* would, were the significance thereof as impressively unfolded, were the genius that could so unfold it once given us by the kind Heavens. Neither say thou that proper Realities are wanting: for Man's Life, now, as of old, is the genuine work of God; wherever there is a Man, a God also is revealed, and all that is Godlike: a whole epitome of the Infinite, with its meanings, lies enfolded in the Life of every Man. Only, alas, that the Seer to discern this same Godlike, and with fit utterance *un*fold it for us, is wanting, and may long be wanting!

'Nay, a question arises on us here, wherein the whole German reading-world will eagerly join: Whether man *can* any longer be so interested by the spoken Word, as he often was in those primeval days, when rapt away by its inscrutable power, he pronounced it, in such dialect as he had, to be *transcendental* (to *transcend* all measure), to be sacred, prophetic and the inspiration of a god? For myself, I (*ich meines Ortes*), by faith or by insight, do heartily understand that the answer to such question will be, Yea! For never that I could in searching find out, has Man been, by Time which devours so much, deprivated of any faculty whatsoever that he in any era was possessed of. To my seeming, the babe born yesterday has all the organs of Body, Soul and Spirit, and in exactly the same combination and entireness, that the oldest Pelasgic Greek, or Mesopotamian Patriarch, or Father Adam himself could boast of. Ten fingers, one heart with venous and arterial blood therein, still belong to man that is born of woman: when did he lose any of his spiritual Endowments either; above all, his highest spiritual Endow-

'ment, that of revealing Poetic Beauty, and of adequately re-'ceiving the same? Not the material, not the susceptibility is 'wanting; only the Poet, or long series of Poets, to work on 'these. True, alas too true, the Poet *is* still utterly wanting, 'or all but utterly: nevertheless have we not centuries enough 'before us to produce him in? Him and much else!—I, for 'the present, will but predict that chiefly by working more and 'more on REALITY, and evolving more and more wisely *its* in-'exhaustible meanings; and, in brief, speaking forth in fit 'utterance whatsoever our whole soul *believes*, and ceasing to 'speak forth what thing soever our whole soul does not believe, '—will this high emprise be accomplished, or approximated 'to.'

These notable, and not unfounded, though partial and *deep*-seeing rather than *wide*-seeing observations on the great import of REALITY, considered even as a poetic material, we have inserted the more willingly, because a transient feeling to the same purpose may often have suggested itself to many readers; and, on the whole, it is good that every reader and every writer understand, with all intensity of conviction, what quite infinite worth lies in *Truth;* how all-pervading, omnipotent, in man's mind, is the thing we name *Belief*. For the rest, Herr Sauerteig, though one-sided, on this matter of Reality, seems heartily persuaded, and is not perhaps so ignorant as he looks. It cannot be unknown to him, for example, what noise is made about 'Invention;' what a supreme rank this faculty is reckoned to hold in the poetic endowment. Great truly is Invention; nevertheless, that is but a poor exercise of it with which Belief is not concerned. 'An Irishman with whisky in his head,' as poor Byron said, will invent you, in this kind, till there is enough and to spare. Nay, perhaps, if we consider well, the highest exercise of Invention has, in very deed, nothing to do with Fiction; but is an invention of new Truth, what we can call a Revelation; which last does undoubtedly transcend all other poetic efforts, nor can Herr Sauerteig be too loud in its praises. But, on the other hand, whether such effort is still possible for man, Herr Sauerteig and the bulk of the world are probably at issue;—and will probably continue so till that same 'Revelation,' or new 'Invention of Reality,' of the sort he desiderates, shall itself make its appearance.

Meanwhile, quitting these airy regions, let any one bethink him how impressive the smallest historical *fact* may become, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious event;* what an incalculable force lies for us in this consideration: The Thing which I here hold imaged in my mind did actually occur; was, in very truth, an element in the system of the All, whereof I too form part; had therefore, and has, through all time, an authentic being; is not a dream, but a reality! We ourselves can remember reading, in *Lord Clarendon*,[2] with feelings perhaps somehow accidentally opened to it,—certainly with a depth of impression strange to us then and now,—that insignificant-looking passage, where Charles, after the battle of Worcester, glides down, with Squire Careless, from the Royal Oak, at nightfall, being hungry: how, 'making a shift to get 'over hedges and ditches, after walking at least eight or nine 'miles, which were the more grievous to the King by the 'weight of his boots (for he could not put *them* off when he 'cut off his hair, for want of shoes), before morning they came 'to *a poor cottage, the owner whereof, being a Roman Catholic, 'was known to Careless.*' How this poor drudge, being knocked-up from his snoring, 'carried them into a little barn full of hay, 'which was a better lodging than he had for himself;' and by and by, not without difficulty, brought his Majesty 'a piece of bread and a great pot of buttermilk,' saying candidly that "he himself lived by his daily labour, and that what he had brought him was the fare he and his wife had:" on which nourishing diet his Majesty, 'staying upon the haymow,' feeds thankfully for two days; and then departs, under new guidance, having first changed clothes, down to the very shirt and 'old pair of shoes,' with his landlord; and so, as worthy Bunyan has it, 'goes on his way, and sees him no more.' Singular enough, if we will think of it! This, then, was a genuine flesh-and-blood Rustic of the year 1651: he did actually swallow bread and buttermilk (not having ale and bacon), and do field-labour: with these hobnailed 'shoes' has sprawled through mud-roads in winter, and, jocund or not, driven his team a-field in summer: he made bargains; had chafferings and higglings, now a sore heart, now a glad one; was born; was a son, was a father; toiled in many ways, being forced to it, till the strength was

[2] *History of the Rebellion*, iii. 625.

all worn out of him; and then—lay down 'to rest his galled back,' and sleep there till the long-distant morning!—How comes it, that he alone of all the British rustics who tilled and lived along with him, on whom the blessed sun on that same 'fifth day of September' was shining, should have chanced to rise on us; that this poor pair of clouted Shoes, out of the million million hides that have been tanned, and cut, and worn, should still subsist, and hang visibly together? We see him but for a moment; for one moment, the blanket of the Night is rent asunder, so that we behold and see, and then closes over him—forever.

So too, in some *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, how indelible and magically bright does many a little *Reality* dwell in our remembrance! There is no need that the personages on the scene be a King and Clown; that the scene be the Forest of the Royal Oak, 'on the borders of Staffordshire:' need only that the scene lie on this old firm Earth of ours, where we also have so surprisingly arrived; that the personages be *men*, and *seen* with the eyes of a man. Foolish enough, how some slight, perhaps mean and even ugly incident, if *real* and well presented, will fix itself in a susceptive memory, and lie ennobled there; silvered over with the pale cast of thought, with the pathos which belongs only to the Dead. For the Past is all holy to us; the Dead are all holy, even they that were base and wicked while alive. Their baseness and wickedness was not *They*, was but the heavy and unmanageable Environment that lay round them, with which they fought unprevailing: *they* (the ethereal god-given Force that dwelt in them, and was their *Self*) have now shuffled-off that heavy Environment, and are free and pure: their life-long Battle, go how it might, is all ended, with many wounds or with fewer; they have been recalled from it, and the once harsh-jarring battle-field has become a silent awe-inspiring Golgotha, and *Gottesacker* (Field of God)!—Boswell relates this in itself smallest and poorest of occurrences: 'As we 'walked along the Strand tonight, arm in arm, a woman of 'the town accosted us in the usual enticing manner. "No, 'no, my girl," said Johnson; "it won't do." He, however, 'did not treat her with harshness; and we talked of the wretched 'life of such women.' Strange power of *Reality!* Not even this poorest of occurrences, but now, after seventy years are

come and gone, has a meaning for us. Do but consider that it is *true;* that it did in very deed occur! That unhappy Outcast, with all her sins and woes, her lawless desires, too complex mischances, her wailings and her riotings, has departed utterly; alas! her siren finery has got all besmutched, ground, generations since, into dust and smoke; of her degraded body, and whole miserable earthly existence, all is away: *she* is no longer here, but far from us, in the bosom of Eternity,—whence we too came, whither we too are bound! Johnson said, "No, no, my girl; it won't do;" and then 'we talked;'—and herewith the wretched one, seen but for the twinkling of an eye, passes on into the utter Darkness. No high Calista, that ever issued from Story-teller's brain, will impress us more deeply than this meanest of the mean; and for a good reason: That *she* issued from the Maker of Men.

It is well worth the Artist's while to examine for himself what it is that gives such pitiable incidents their memorableness; his aim likewise is, above all things, to be *memorable.* Half the effect, we already perceive, depends on the object; on its being *real,* on its being really *seen.* The other half will depend on the observer; and the question now is: How are real objects to be *so* seen; on what quality of observing, or of style in describing, does this so intense pictorial power depend? Often a slight circumstance contributes curiously to the result: some little, and perhaps to appearance accidental, feature is presented; a light-gleam, which instantaneously *excites* the mind, and urges it to complete the picture, and evolve the meaning thereof for itself. By critics, such light-gleams and their almost magical influence have frequently been noted: but the power to produce such, to select such features as will produce them, is generally treated as a knack, or trick of the trade, a secret for being 'graphic;' whereas these magical feats are, in truth, rather inspirations; and the gift of performing them, which acts unconsciously, without forethought, and as if by nature alone, is properly a *genius* for description.

One grand, invaluable secret there is, however, which includes all the rest, and, what is comfortable, lies clearly in every man's power: *To have an open loving heart, and what follows from the possession of such.* Truly, it has been said, emphatically in these days ought it to be repeated: A loving

Heart is the beginning of all Knowledge. This it is that opens the whole mind, quickens every faculty of the intellect to do its fit work, that of *knowing;* and therefrom, by sure consequence, of *vividly uttering-forth.* Other secret for being 'graphic' is there none, worth having: but this is an all-sufficient one. See, for example, what a small Boswell can do! Hereby, indeed, is the whole man made a living mirror, wherein the wonders of this ever-wonderful Universe are, in their true light (which is ever a magical, miraculous one) represented, and reflected back on us. It has been said, 'the heart sees farther than the head:' but, indeed, without the seeing heart, there is no true seeing for the head so much as possible; all is mere *oversight,* hallucination and vain superficial phantasmagoria, which can permanently profit no one.

Here, too, may we not pause for an instant, and make a practical reflection? Considering the multitude of mortals that handle the Pen in these days, and can mostly spell, and write without glaring violations of grammar, the question naturally arises: How is it, then, that no Work proceeds from them, bearing any stamp of authenticity and permanence; of worth for more than one day? Ship-loads of Fashionable Novels, Sentimental Rhymes, Tragedies, Farces, Diaries of Travel, Tales by flood and field, are swallowed monthly into the bottomless Pool: still does the Press toil; innumerable Paper-makers, Compositors, Printers' Devils, Book-binders, and Hawkers grown hoarse with loud proclaiming, rest not from their labour; and still, in torrents, rushes on the great array of Publications, unpausing, to their final home; and still Oblivion, like the Grave, cries, Give! Give! How is it that of all these countless multitudes, no one can attain to the smallest mark of excellence, or produce aught that shall endure longer than 'snow-flake on the river,' or the foam of penny-beer? We answer: Because they *are* foam; because there is no *Reality* in them. These Three Thousand men, women and children, that make up the army of British Authors, do not, if we will well consider it, *see* anything whatever; consequently *have* nothing that they can record and utter, only more or fewer things that they can plausibly pretend to record. The Universe, of Man and Nature, is still quite shut-up from them; the 'open secret' still utterly a secret; because no sympathy with Man or Nature, no love and

free simplicity of heart has yet unfolded the same. Nothing but a pitiful Image of their own pitiful Self, with its vanities, and grudgings, and ravenous hunger of all kinds, hangs forever painted in the retina of these unfortunate persons; so that the starry ALL, with whatsoever it embraces, does but appear as some expanded magic-lantern shadow of that same Image,—and naturally looks pitiful enough.

It is vain for these persons to allege that they are naturally without gift, naturally stupid and sightless, and so *can* attain to no knowledge of anything; therefore, in writing of anything, must needs write falsehoods of it, there being in it no truth for them. Not so, good Friends. The stupidest of you has a certain faculty; were it but that of articulate speech (say, in the Scottish, the Irish, the Cockney dialect, or even in 'Governess-English'), and of physically discerning what lies under your nose. The stupidest of you would perhaps grudge to be compared in faculty with James Boswell; yet see what he has produced! You do not use your faculty honestly; your heart is shut up; full of greediness, malice, discontent; so your intellectual sense cannot be open. It is vain also to urge that James Boswell had opportunities; saw great men and great things, such as you can never hope to look on. What make ye of Parson White in Selborne? He had not only no great men to look on, but not even men; merely sparrows and cock-chafers: yet has he left us a *Biography* of these; which, under its title *Natural History of Selborne*, still remains valuable to us; which has copied a little sentence or two *faithfully* from the Inspired Volume of Nature, and so is itself not without inspiration. Go ye and do likewise. Sweep away utterly all frothiness and falsehood from your heart; struggle unweariedly to acquire, what is possible for every god-created Man, a free, open, humble soul: *speak not at all, in any wise, till you have somewhat to speak;* care not for the *reward* of your speaking, but simply and with undivided mind for the *truth* of your speaking: then be placed in what section of Space and of Time soever, do but open your eyes, and they shall actually *see*, and bring you real *knowledge*, wondrous, worthy of *belief;* and instead of one Boswell and one White, the world will rejoice in a thousand,—stationed on their thousand several watch-towers, to instruct us by indubitable documents, of whatsoever in our so stupendous World

comes to light and *is!* O, had the Editor of this Magazine but a magic rod to turn all that not inconsiderable Intellect, which now deluges us with artificial fictitious soap-lather, and mere Lying, into the faithful study of Reality,—what knowledge of great, everlasting Nature, and of Man's ways and doings therein, would not every year bring us in! Can we but change one single soap-latherer and mountebank Juggler, into a true Thinker and Doer, who even *tries* honestly to think and do,—great will be our reward.

But to return; or rather from this point to begin our journey! If now, what with Herr Sauerteig's *Springwurzeln*, what with so much lucubration of our own, it have become apparent how deep, immeasurable is the 'worth that lies in *Reality*,' and farther, how exclusive the interest which man takes in Histories of Man,—may it not seem lamentable, that so few genuinely good *Biographies* have yet been accumulated in Literature; that in the whole world, one cannot find, going strictly to work, above some dozen, or baker's dozen, and those chiefly of very ancient date? Lamentable; yet, after what we have just seen, accountable. Another question might be asked: How comes it that in England we have simply one good Biography, this *Boswell's Johnson;* and of good, indifferent, or even bad attempts at Biography, fewer than any civilised people? Consider the French and Germans, with their Moreris, Bayles, Jördenses, Jöchers, their innumerable *Mémoires*, and *Schilderungen*, and *Biographies Universelles;* not to speak of Rousseaus, Goethes, Schubarts, Jung-Stillings: and then contrast with these our poor Birches and Kippises and Pecks; the whole breed of whom, moreover, is now extinct!

With this question, as the answer might lead us far, and come out unflattering to patriotic sentiment, we shall not intermeddle; but turn rather, with great pleasure, to the fact, that one excellent Biography *is* actually English;—and even now lies, in Five new Volumes, at our hand, soliciting a new consideration from us; such as, age after age (the Perennial showing ever new phases as *our* position alters), it may long be profitable to bestow on it;—to which task we here, in this position, in this age, gladly address ourselves.

First, however, let the foolish April-fool Day pass by; and

our Reader, during these twenty-nine days of uncertain weather that will follow, keep pondering, according to convenience, the purport of BIOGRAPHY in general: then, with the blessed dew of May-day, and in unlimited convenience of space, shall all that we have written on *Johnson* and *Boswell's Johnson* and *Croker's Boswell's Johnson* be faithfully laid before him.

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.[1]

[1832.]

ÆSOP'S Fly, sitting on the axle of the chariot, has been much laughed at for exclaiming: What a dust I do raise! Yet which of us, in his way, has not sometimes been guilty of the like? Nay, so foolish are men, they often, standing at ease and as spectators on the highway, will volunteer to exclaim of the Fly (not being tempted to it, as *he* was) exactly to the same purport: What a dust *thou* dost raise! Smallest of mortals, when mounted aloft by circumstances, come to seem great; smallest of phenomena connected with them are treated as important, and must be sedulously scanned, and commented upon with loud emphasis.

That Mr. Croker should undertake to edit *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, was a praiseworthy but no miraculous procedure: neither could the accomplishment of such undertaking be, in an epoch like ours, anywise regarded as an event in Universal History; the right or the wrong accomplishment thereof was, in very truth, one of the most insignificant of things. However, it sat in a great environment, on the axle of a high, fast-rolling, parliamentary chariot; and all the world has exclaimed over it, and the author of it: What a dust thou dost raise! List to the Reviews, and 'Organs of Public Opinion,' from the *National Omnibus* upwards: criticisms, vituperative and laudatory, stream from their thousand throats of brass and of leather; here chanting *Io-pæans*; there grating harsh thunder or vehement shrewmouse squeaklets; till the general ear is filled, and nigh deafened. Boswell's Book had a noiseless birth,

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 28.—*The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.; including a Tour to the Hebrides.* By James Boswell, Esq.—A new Edition, with numerous Additions and Notes, by John Wilson Croker, LL.D., F.R.S. 5 vols. London, 1831.

compared with this Edition of Boswell's Book. On the other hand, consider with what degree of tumult *Paradise Lost* and the *Iliad* were ushered in!

To swell such clamour, or prolong it beyond the time, seems nowise our vocation here. At most, perhaps, we are bound to inform simple readers, with all possible brevity, what manner of performance and Edition this is; especially, whether, in our poor judgment, it is worth laying out three pounds sterling upon, yea or not. The whole business belongs distinctly to the lower ranks of the trivial class.

Let us admit, then, with great readiness, that as Johnson once said, and the Editor repeats, 'all works which describe manners require notes in sixty or seventy years, or less;' that, accordingly, a new Edition of Boswell was desirable; and that Mr. Croker has given one. For this task he had various qualifications: his own voluntary resolution to do it; his high place in society, unlocking all manner of archives to him; not less, perhaps, a certain anecdotico-biographic turn of mind, natural or acquired; we mean, a love for the *minuter* events of History, and talent for investigating these. Let us admit too, that he has been very diligent; seems to have made inquiries perseveringly far and near; as well as drawn freely from his own ample stores; and so tells us, to appearance quite accurately, much that he has not found lying on the highways, but has had to seek and dig for. Numerous persons, chiefly of quality, rise to view in these Notes; when and also where they came into this world, received office or promotion, died and were buried (only what they *did*, except digest, remaining often too mysterious), —is faithfully enough set down. Whereby all that their various and doubtless widely-scattered Tombstones could have taught us, is here presented, at once, in a bound Book. Thus is an indubitable conquest, though a small one, gained over our great enemy, the all-destroyer Time; and as such shall have welcome.

Nay, let us say that the spirit of Diligence, exhibited in this department, seems to attend the Editor honestly throughout: he keeps everywhere a watchful outlook on his Text; reconciling the distant with the present, or at least indicating and regretting their irreconcilability; elucidating, smoothing down; in all ways exercising, according to ability, a strict editorial

superintendence. Any little Latin or even Greek phrase is rendered into English, in general with perfect accuracy; citations are verified, or else corrected. On all hands, moreover, there is a certain spirit of Decency maintained and insisted on: if not good morals, yet good manners, are rigidly inculcated; if not Religion, and a devout Christian heart, yet Orthodoxy, and a cleanly Shovel-hatted look,—which, as compared with flat Nothing, is something very considerable. Grant too, as no contemptible triumph of this latter spirit, that though the Editor is known as a decided Politician and Party-man, he has carefully subdued all temptations to transgress in that way: except by quite involuntary indications, and rather as it were the pervading temper of the whole, you could not discover on which side of the Political Warfare he is enlisted and fights. This, as we said, is a great triumph of the Decency-principle: for this, and for these other graces and performances, let the Editor have all praise.

Herewith, however, must the praise unfortunately terminate. Diligence, Fidelity, Decency, are good and indispensable: yet, without Faculty, without Light, they will not do the work. Along with that Tombstone-information, perhaps even without much of it, we could have liked to gain some answer, in one way or other, to this wide question: What and how was *English Life* in Johnson's time; wherein has ours grown to differ therefrom? In other words: What things have we to forget, what to fancy and remember, before we, from such distance, can put ourselves in Johnson's *place;* and so, in the full sense of the term, *understand* him, his sayings and his doings? This was indeed specially the problem which a Commentator and Editor had to solve: a complete solution of it should have lain in him, his whole mind should have been filled and prepared with perfect insight into it; then, whether in the way of express Dissertation, of incidental Exposition and Indication, opportunities enough would have occurred of bringing out the same: what was dark in the figure of the Past had thereby been enlightened; Boswell had, not in show and word only, but in very fact, been made *new* again, readable to us who are divided from him, even as he was to those close at hand. Of all which very little has been attempted here; accomplished, we should say, next to nothing, or altogether nothing.

Excuse, no doubt, is in readiness for such omission; and, indeed, for innumerable other failings;—as where, for example, the Editor will punctually explain what is already sun-clear; and then anon, not without frankness, declare frequently enough that 'the Editor does not understand,' that 'the Editor cannot guess,'—while, for most part, the Reader cannot help both guessing and seeing. Thus, if Johnson say, in one sentence, that 'English names should not be used in Latin verses;' and then, in the next sentence, speak blamingly of 'Carteret being used as a dactyl,' will the generality of mortals detect any puzzle there? Or again, where poor Boswell writes: 'I always 'remember a remark made to me by a Turkish lady, educated 'in France: "*Ma foi, monsieur, notre bonheur dépend de la 'façon que notre sang circule;*"'—though the Turkish lady here speaks English-French, where is the call for a Note like this: 'Mr. Boswell no doubt fancied these words had some meaning, 'or he would hardly have quoted them: but what that meaning 'is, the Editor cannot guess'? The Editor is clearly no witch at a riddle.—For these and all kindred deficiencies the excuse, as we said, is at hand; but the fact of their existence is not the less certain and regrettable.

Indeed it, from a very early stage of the business, becomes afflictively apparent, how much the Editor, so well furnished with all external appliances and means, is from within unfurnished with means for forming to himself any just notion of Johnson, or of Johnson's Life; and therefore of speaking on that subject with much hope of edifying. Too lightly is it from the first taken for granted that *Hunger*, the great basis of our life, is also its apex and ultimate perfection; that as 'Neediness and Greediness and Vainglory' are the chief qualities of most men, so no man, not even a Johnson, acts or can think of acting on any other principle. Whatsoever, therefore, cannot be referred to the two former categories (Need and Greed), is without scruple ranged under the latter. It is here properly that our Editor becomes burdensome; and, to the weaker sort, even a nuisance. "What good is it," will such cry, "when we had still some faint shadow of belief that man was better than a selfish Digesting-machine, what good is it to poke in, at every turn, and explain how this and that which we thought noble in old Samuel, was vulgar, base; that for him too there was no

reality but in the Stomach ; and except Pudding, and the finer species of pudding which is named Praise, life had no pabulum? Why, for instance, when we know that Johnson *loved* his good Wife, and says expressly that their marriage was 'a love-match on both sides,'—should two closed lips open to tell us only this : 'Is it not possible that the obvious advantage of having 'a woman of experience to superintend an establishment of this 'kind (the Edial School) may have contributed to a match so 'disproportionate in point of age ?—ED.'? Or again when, in the Text, the honest cynic speaks freely of his former poverty, and it is known that he once lived on fourpence-halfpenny a-day,—need a Commentator advance, and comment thus: 'When 'we find Dr. Johnson tell unpleasant truths to, or of, other 'men, let us recollect that he does not appear to have spared 'himself, on occasions in which he might be forgiven for doing 'so'? Why in short," continues the exasperated Reader, "should Notes of this species stand affronting me, when there might have been no Note at all?"—Gentle Reader, we answer, Be not wroth. What other could an honest Commentator do, than give thee the best he had? Such was the picture and theorem he had fashioned for himself of the world and of man's doings therein : take it, and draw wise inferences from it. If there did exist a Leader of Public Opinion, and Champion of Orthodoxy in the Church of Jesus of Nazareth, who reckoned that man's glory consisted in not being poor ; and that a Sage, and Prophet of his time, must needs blush because the world had paid him at that easy rate of fourpence-halfpenny *per diem*, —was not the fact of such existence worth knowing, worth considering?

Of a much milder hue, yet to us practically of an all-defacing, and for the present enterprise quite ruinous character,—is another grand fundamental failing ; the last we shall feel ourselves obliged to take the pain of specifying here. It is, that our Editor has fatally, and almost surprisingly, mistaken the limits of an Editor's function ; and so, instead of working on the margin with his Pen, to elucidate as best might be, strikes boldly into the body of the page with his Scissors, and there clips at discretion! Four Books Mr. C. had by him, wherefrom to gather light for the fifth, which was Boswell's. What does he do but now, in the placidest manner,—slit the whole

five into slips, and sew these together into a *sextum quid*, exactly at his own convenience; giving Boswell the credit of the whole! By what art-magic, our readers ask, has he united them? By the simplest of all: by Brackets. Never before was the full virtue of the Bracket made manifest. You begin a sentence under Boswell's guidance, thinking to be carried happily through it by the same: but no; in the middle, perhaps after your semicolon, and some consequent 'for,'—starts up one of these Bracket-ligatures, and stitches you in from half a page to twenty or thirty pages of a Hawkins, Tyers, Murphy, Piozzi; so that often one must make the old sad reflection, Where we are, we know; whither we are going, no man knoweth! It is truly said also, There is much between the cup and the lip; but here the case is still sadder: for not till after consideration can you ascertain, now when the cup is *at* the lip, what liquor it is you are imbibing; whether Boswell's French wine which you began with, or some Piozzi's ginger-beer, or Hawkins's entire, or perhaps some other great Brewer's penny-swipes or even alegar, which has been surreptitiously substituted instead thereof. A situation almost original; not to be tried a second time! But, in fine, what ideas Mr. Croker entertains of a literary *whole* and the thing called *Book*, and how the very Printer's Devils did not rise in mutiny against such a conglomeration as this, and refuse to print it,—may remain a problem.

And now happily our say is said. All faults, the Moralists tell us, are properly *shortcomings;* crimes themselves are nothing other than a *not doing enough;* a *fighting*, but with defective vigour. How much more a mere insufficiency, and this after good efforts, in handicraft practice! Mr. Croker says: 'The worst that can happen is that all the present Editor has 'contributed may, if the reader so pleases, be rejected as *sur-*'*plusage*.' It is our pleasant duty to take with hearty welcome what he has given; and render thanks even for what he meant to give. Next and finally, it is our painful duty to declare, aloud if that be necessary, that his gift, as weighed against the hard money which the Booksellers demand for giving it you, is (in our judgment) very greatly the lighter. No portion, accordingly, of our small floating capital has been embarked in the business, or shall ever be; indeed, were we in the market for such a thing, there is simply *no* Edition of *Boswell* to which

this last would seem preferable. And now enough, and more than enough!

We have next a word to say of James Boswell. Boswell has already been much commented upon; but rather in the way of censure and vituperation than of true recognition. He was a man that brought himself much before the world; confessed that he eagerly coveted fame, or if that were not possible, notoriety; of which latter as he gained far more than seemed his due, the public were incited, not only by their natural love of scandal, but by a special ground of envy, to say whatever ill of him could be said. Out of the fifteen millions that then lived, and had bed and board, in the British Islands, this man has provided us a greater *pleasure* than any other individual, at whose cost we now enjoy ourselves; perhaps has done us a greater *service* than can be specially attributed to more than two or three: yet, ungrateful that we are, no written or spoken eulogy of James Boswell anywhere exists; his recompense in solid pudding (so far as copyright went) was not excessive; and as for the empty praise, it has altogether been denied him. Men are unwiser than children; they do *not* know the hand that feeds them.

Boswell was a person whose mean or bad qualities lay open to the general eye; visible, palpable to the dullest. His good qualities, again, belonged not to the Time he lived in; were far from common then; indeed, in such a degree, were almost unexampled; not recognisable therefore by every one; nay, apt even (so strange had they grown) to be confounded with the very vices they lay contiguous to, and had sprung out of. That he was a wine-bibber and gross liver; gluttonously fond of whatever would yield him a little solacement, were it only of a stomachic character, is undeniable enough. That he was vain, heedless, a babbler; had much of the sycophant, alternating with the braggadocio, curiously spiced too with an all-pervading dash of the coxcomb; that he gloried much when the Tailor, by a court-suit, had made a new man of him; that he appeared at the Shakspeare Jubilee with a riband, imprinted 'CORSICA BOSWELL,' round his hat; and in short, if you will, lived no day of his life without doing and saying more than one pretentious ineptitude: all this unhappily is evident as the sun at

noon. The very look of Boswell seems to have signified so much. In that cocked nose, cocked partly in triumph over his weaker fellow-creatures, partly to snuff-up the smell of coming pleasure, and scent it from afar; in those bag-cheeks, hanging like half-filled wine-skins, still able to contain more; in that coarsely-protruded shelf-mouth, that fat dewlapped chin; in all this, who sees not sensuality, pretension, boisterous imbecility enough; much that could not have been ornamental in the temper of a great man's overfed great man (what the Scotch name *flunky*), though it had been more natural there? The under part of Boswell's face is of a low, almost brutish character.

Unfortunately, on the other hand, what great and genuine good lay in him was nowise so self-evident. That Boswell was a hunter after spiritual Notabilities, that he loved such, and longed, and even crept and crawled to be near them; that he first (in old Touchwood Auchinleck's phraseology) "took on with Paoli;" and then being off with "the Corsican landlouper," took on with a schoolmaster, "ane that keeped a schule, and ca'd it an academy:" that he did all this, and could not help doing it, we account a very singular merit. The man, once for all, had an 'open sense,' an open loving heart, which so few have: where Excellence existed, he was compelled to acknowledge it; was drawn towards it, and (let the old sulphur-brand of a Laird say what he liked) *could not but* walk with it,—if not as superior, if not as equal, then as inferior and lackey, better so than not at all. If we reflect now that this love of Excellence had not only such an evil *nature* to triumph over; but also what an *education* and social position withstood it and weighed it down, its innate strength, victorious over all these things, may astonish us. Consider what an inward impulse there must have been, how many mountains of impediment hurled aside, before the Scottish Laird could, as humble servant, embrace the knees (the bosom was not permitted him) of the English Dominie! Your Scottish Laird, says an English naturalist of these days, may be defined as the hungriest and vainest of all bipeds yet known. Boswell too was a Tory; of quite peculiarly feudal, genealogical, pragmatical temper; had been nurtured in an atmosphere of Heraldry, at the feet of a very Gamaliel in that kind; within bare

walls, adorned only with pedigrees, amid serving-men in threadbare livery; all things teaching him, from birth upwards, to remember that a Laird was a Laird. Perhaps there was a special vanity in his very blood: old Auchinleck had, if not the gay, tail-spreading, peacock vanity of his son, no little of the slow-stalking, contentious, hissing vanity of the gander; a still more fatal species. Scottish Advocates will yet tell you how the ancient man, having chanced to be the first sheriff appointed (after the abolition of 'hereditary jurisdictions') by royal authority, was wont, in dull-snuffling pompous tone, to preface many a deliverance from the bench with these words: "I, the first King's Sheriff in Scotland."

And now behold the worthy Bozzy, so prepossessed and held back by nature and by art, fly nevertheless like iron to its magnet, whither his better genius called! You may surround the iron and the magnet with what enclosures and encumbrances you please,—with wood, with rubbish, with brass: it matters not, the two feel each other, they struggle restlessly towards each other, they *will* be together. The iron may be a Scottish squirelet, full of gulosity and 'gigmanity;'[2] the magnet an English plebeian, and moving rag-and-dust mountain, coarse, proud, irascible, imperious: nevertheless, behold how they embrace, and inseparably cleave to one another! It is one of the strangest phenomena of the past century, that at a time when the old reverent feeling of Discipleship (such as brought men from far countries, with rich gifts, and prostrate soul, to the feet of the Prophets) had passed utterly away from men's practical experience, and was no longer surmised to exist (as it does), perennial, indestructible, in man's inmost heart,—James Boswell should have been the individual, of all others, predestined to recall it, in such singular guise, to the wondering, and, for a long while, laughing and unrecognising world. It has been commonly said, The man's vulgar vanity was all that attached him to Johnson; he delighted to be seen near him, to be thought connected with him. Now let it be at once granted that no consideration springing out of vulgar vanity could well be absent from the mind of James Boswell, in this his intercourse

[2] '*Q.* What do you mean by "respectable"?—*A.* He always kept a gig.' (*Thurtell's Trial.*)—'Thus,' it has been said, 'does society naturally divide itself into four classes: Noblemen, Gentlemen, Gigmen and Men.'

with Johnson, or in any considerable transaction of his life. At the same time, ask yourself: Whether such vanity, and nothing else, actuated him therein; whether this was the true essence and moving principle of the phenomenon, or not rather its outward vesture, and the accidental environment (and defacement) in which it came to light? The man was, by nature and habit, vain; a sycophant-coxcomb, be it granted: but had there been nothing more than vanity in him, was Samuel Johnson the man of men to whom he must attach himself? At the date when Johnson was a poor rusty-coated 'scholar,' dwelling in Temple-lane, and indeed throughout their whole intercourse afterwards, were there not chancellors and prime ministers enough; graceful gentlemen, the glass of fashion; honour-giving noblemen; dinner-giving rich men; renowned fire-eaters, swordsmen, gownsmen; Quacks and Realities of all hues,—any one of whom bulked much larger in the world's eye than Johnson ever did? To any one of whom, by half that submissiveness and assiduity, our Bozzy might have recommended himself; and sat there, the envy of surrounding lickspittles; pocketing now solid emolument, swallowing now well-cooked viands and wines of rich vintage; in each case, also, shone-on by some glittering reflex of Renown or Notoriety, so as to be the observed of innumerable observers. To no one of whom, however, though otherwise a most diligent solicitor and purveyor, did he so attach himself: such vulgar courtierships were his paid drudgery, or leisure amusement; the worship of Johnson was his grand, ideal, voluntary business. Does not the frothy-hearted, yet enthusiastic man, doffing his Advocate's-wig, regularly take post, and hurry up to London, for the sake of his Sage chiefly; as to a Feast of Tabernacles, the Sabbath of his whole year? The plate-licker and wine-bibber dives into Bolt Court, to sip muddy coffee with a cynical old man, and a sour-tempered blind old woman (feeling the cups, whether they are full, with her finger); and patiently endures contradictions without end; too happy so he may but be allowed to listen and live. Nay, it does not appear that vulgar vanity could ever have been much flattered by Boswell's relation to Johnson. Mr. Croker says, Johnson was, to the last, little regarded by the great world; from which, for a vulgar vanity, all honour, as from its fountain, descends. Bozzy, even among Johnson's friends and special admirers,

seems rather to have been laughed at than envied: his officious, whisking, consequential ways, the daily reproofs and rebuffs he underwent, could gain from the world no golden but only leaden opinions. His devout Discipleship seemed nothing more than a mean Spanielship, in the general eye. His mighty 'constellation,' or sun, round whom he, as satellite, observantly gyrated, was, for the mass of men, but a huge ill-snuffed tallow-light, and he a weak night-moth, circling foolishly, dangerously about it, not knowing what he wanted. If he enjoyed Highland dinners and toasts, as henchman to a new sort of chieftain, Henry Erskine, in the domestic 'Outer-House,' could hand him a shilling "for the sight of his Bear." Doubtless the man was laughed at, and often heard himself laughed at for his Johnsonism. To be envied is the grand and sole aim of vulgar vanity; to be filled with good things is that of sensuality: for Johnson perhaps no man living *envied* poor Bozzy; and of good things (except himself paid for them) there was no vestige in that acquaintanceship. Had nothing other or better than vanity and sensuality been there, Johnson and Boswell had never come together, or had soon and finally separated again.

In fact, the so copious terrestrial dross that welters chaotically, as the outer sphere of this man's character, does but render for us more remarkable, more touching, the celestial spark of goodness, of light, and Reverence for Wisdom, which dwelt in the interior, and could struggle through such encumbrances, and in some degree illuminate and beautify them. There is much lying yet undeveloped in the love of Boswell for Johnson. A cheering proof, in a time which else utterly wanted and still wants such, that living Wisdom is quite *infinitely* precious to man, is the symbol of the Godlike to him, which even weak eyes may discern; that Loyalty, Discipleship, all that was ever meant by *Hero-worship*, lives perennially in the human bosom, and waits, even in these dead days, only for occasions to unfold it, and inspire all men with it, and again make the world alive! James Boswell we can regard as a practical witness, or real *martyr*, to this high everlasting truth. A wonderful martyr, if you will; and in a time which made such martyrdom doubly wonderful: yet the time and its martyr perhaps suited each other. For a decrepit, death-sick Era, when CANT had first decisively opened her poison-breathing lips to proclaim that God-

worship and Mammon-worship were one and the same, that Life was a *Lie*, and the Earth Beelzebub's, which the *Supreme Quack* should inherit; and so all things were fallen into the yellow leaf, and fast hastening to noisome corruption: for such an Era, perhaps no better Prophet than a parti-coloured Zany-Prophet, concealing, from himself and others, his prophetic significance in such unexpected vestures,—was deserved, or would have been in place. A precious medicine lay hidden in floods of coarsest, most composite treacle: the world swallowed the treacle, for it suited the world's palate; and now, after half a century, may the medicine also begin to show itself! James Boswell belonged, in his corruptible part, to the lowest classes of mankind; a foolish, inflated creature, swimming in an element of self-conceit: but in his corruptible there dwelt an incorruptible, all the more impressive and indubitable for the strange lodging it had taken.

Consider too, with what force, diligence and vivacity he has rendered back all this which, in Johnson's neighbourhood, his 'open sense' had so eagerly and freely taken in. That loose-flowing, careless-looking Work of his is as a picture by one of Nature's own Artists; the best possible resemblance of a Reality; like the very image thereof in a clear mirror. Which indeed it was: let but the mirror be *clear*, this is the great point; the picture must and will be genuine. How the babbling Bozzy, inspired only by love, and the recognition and vision which love can lend, epitomises nightly the words of Wisdom, the deeds and aspects of Wisdom, and so, by little and little, unconsciously works together for us a whole *Johnsoniad;* a more free, perfect, sunlit and spirit-speaking likeness than for many centuries had been drawn by man of man! Scarcely since the days of Homer has the feat been equalled; indeed, in many senses, this also is a kind of Heroic Poem. The fit *Odyssey* of our unheroic age was to be written, not sung; of a Thinker, not of a Fighter; and (for want of a Homer) by the first open soul that might offer,—looked such even through the organs of a Boswell. We do the man's intellectual endowment great wrong, if we measure it by its mere logical outcome; though here too, there is not wanting a light ingenuity, a figurativeness and fanciful sport, with glimpses of insight far deeper than the common. But Boswell's grand intellectual talent was, as such ever

is, an *unconscious* one, of far higher reach and significance than Logic; and showed itself in the whole, not in parts. Here again we have that old saying verified, 'The heart sees farther than the head.'

Thus does poor Bozzy stand out to us as an ill-assorted, glaring mixture of the highest and the lowest. What, indeed, is man's life generally but a kind of beast-godhood; the god in us triumphing more and more over the beast; striving more and more to subdue it under his feet? Did not the Ancients, in their wise, perennially-significant way, figure Nature itself, their sacred ALL, or PAN, as a portentous commingling of these two discords; as musical, humane, oracular in its upper part, yet ending below in the cloven hairy feet of a goat? The union of melodious, celestial Freewill and Reason with foul Irrationality and Lust; in which, nevertheless, dwelt a mysterious unspeakable Fear and half-mad *panic* Awe; as for mortals there well might! And is not man a microcosm, or epitomised mirror of that same Universe; or rather, is not that Universe even Himself, the reflex of his own fearful and wonderful being, 'the waste fantasy of his own dream'? No wonder that man, that each man, and James Boswell like the others, should resemble it! The peculiarity in his case was the unusual defect of amalgamation and subordination: the highest lay side by side with the lowest; not morally combined with it and spiritually transfiguring it, but tumbling in half-mechanical juxtaposition with it, and from time to time, as the mad alternation chanced, irradiating it, or eclipsed by it.

The world, as we said, has been but unjust to him; discerning only the outer terrestrial and often sordid mass; without eye, as it generally is, for his inner divine secret; and thus figuring him nowise as a god Pan, but simply of the bestial species, like the cattle on a thousand hills. Nay, sometimes a strange enough hypothesis has been started of him; as if it were in virtue even of these same bad qualities that he did his good work; as if it were the very fact of his being among the worst men in this world that had enabled him to write one of the best books therein! Falser hypothesis, we may venture to say, never rose in human soul. *Bad* is by its nature negative, and can do *nothing*: whatsoever enables us to *do* anything is by its very nature *good*. Alas, that there should be teachers in

Israel, or even learners, to whom this world-ancient fact is still problematical, or even deniable! Boswell wrote a good Book because he had a heart and an eye to discern Wisdom, and an utterance to render it forth; because of his free insight, his lively talent, above all, of his Love and childlike Open-mindedness. His sneaking sycophancies, his greediness and forwardness, whatever was bestial and earthy in him, are so many blemishes in his Book, which still disturb us in its clearness; wholly hindrances, not helps. Towards Johnson, however, his feeling was not Sycophancy, which is the lowest, but Reverence, which is the highest of human feelings. None but a *reverent* man (which so unspeakably few are) could have found his way from Boswell's environment to Johnson's: if such worship for real God-made superiors showed itself also as worship for apparent Tailor-made superiors, even as hollow interested mouth-worship for such,—the case, in this composite human nature of ours, was not miraculous, the more was the pity! But for ourselves, let every one of us cling to this last article of Faith, and know it as the beginning of all knowledge worth the name: That neither James Boswell's good Book, nor any other good thing, in any time or in any place, was, is or can be performed by any man in virtue of his *badness*, but always and solely in spite thereof.

As for the Book itself, questionless the universal favour entertained for it is well merited. In worth as a Book we have rated it beyond any other product of the eighteenth century: all Johnson's own Writings, laborious and in their kind genuine above most, stand on a quite inferior level to it; already, indeed, they are becoming obsolete for this generation; and for some future generation may be valuable chiefly as Prolegomena and expository Scholia to this *Johnsoniad* of Boswell. Which of us but remembers, as one of the sunny spots in his existence, the day when he opened these airy volumes, fascinating him by a true natural magic! It was as if the curtains of the past were drawn aside, and we looked mysteriously into a kindred country, where dwelt our Fathers; inexpressibly dear to us, but which had seemed forever hidden from our eyes. For the dead Night had engulfed it; all was gone, vanished as if it had not been. Nevertheless, wondrously given back to us, there once more it lay; all bright, lucid, blooming; a little island of Crea-

tion amid the circumambient Void. There it still lies; like a thing stationary, imperishable, over which changeful Time were now accumulating itself in vain, and could not, any longer, harm it, or hide it.

If we examine by what charm it is that men are still held to this *Life of Johnson*, now when so much else has been forgotten, the main part of the answer will perhaps be found in that speculation 'on the import of *Reality*,' communicated to the world, last month, in this Magazine. The *Johnsoniad* of Boswell turns on objects that in very deed existed; it is all *true*. So far other in melodiousness of tone, it vies with the *Odyssey*, or surpasses it, in this one point: to us these read pages, as those chanted hexameters were to the first Greek hearers, are, in the fullest deepest sense, wholly *credible*. All the wit and wisdom lying embalmed in Boswell's Book, plenteous as these are, could not have saved it. Far more scientific *instruction* (mere excitement and enlightenment of the *thinking power*) can be found in twenty other works of that time, which make but a quite secondary impression on us. The other works of that time, however, fall under one of two classes: Either they are professedly Didactic; and, in that way, mere Abstractions, Philosophic Diagrams, incapable of interesting us much otherwise than as *Euclid's Elements* may do: Or else, with all their vivacity, and pictorial richness of colour, *they are Fictions and not Realities*. Deep truly, as Herr Sauertieg urges, is the force of this consideration: the thing here stated is a fact; those figures, that local habitation, are not shadow but substance. In virtue of such advantages, see how a very Boswell may become Poetical!

Critics insist much on the Poet that he should communicate an 'Infinitude' to his delineation; that by intensity of conception, by that gift of 'transcendental Thought,' which is fitly named *genius*, and inspiration, he should *inform* the Finite with a certain Infinitude of significance; or as they sometimes say, ennoble the Actual into Idealness. They are right in their precept; they mean rightly. But in cases like this of the *Johnsoniad*, such is the dark grandeur of that 'Time element,' wherein man's soul here below lives imprisoned,—the Poet's task is, as it were, done to his hand: Time itself, which is the outer veil of Eternity, invests, of its own

accord, with an authentic, felt 'infinitude' whatsoever it has once embraced in its mysterious folds. Consider all that lies in that one word *Past!* What a pathetic, sacred, in every sense *poetic*, meaning is implied in it; a meaning growing ever the clearer, the farther we recede in Time,—the *more* of that same Past we have to look through!—On which ground indeed must Sauerteig have built, and not without plausibility, in that strange thesis of his: 'That History, after all, is the true 'Poetry; that Reality, if rightly interpreted, is grander than 'Fiction; nay that even in the right interpretation of Reality 'and History does genuine Poetry consist.'

Thus for *Boswell's Life of Johnson* has Time done, is Time still doing, what no ornament of Art or Artifice could have done for it. Rough Samuel and sleek wheedling James *were*, and *are not*. Their Life and whole personal Environment has melted into air. The Mitre Tavern still stands in Fleet Street: but where now is its scot-and-lot paying, beef-and-ale loving, cocked-hatted, pot-bellied Landlord; its rosy-faced assiduous Landlady, with all her shining brass-pans, waxed tables, well-filled larder-shelves; her cooks, and bootjacks, and errand-boys, and watery-mouthed hangers-on? Gone! Gone! The becking Waiter who, with wreathed smiles, was wont to spread for Samuel and Bozzy their supper of the gods, has long since pocketed his last sixpence; and vanished, sixpences and all, like a ghost at cock-crowing. The Bottles they drank out of are all broken, the Chairs they sat on all rotted and burnt; the very Knives and Forks they ate with have rusted to the heart, and become brown oxide of iron, and mingled with the indiscriminate clay. All, all has vanished; in every deed and truth, like that baseless fabric of Prospero's air-vision. Of the Mitre Tavern nothing but the bare walls remain there: of London, of England, of the World, nothing but the bare walls remain; and these also decaying (were they of adamant), only slower. The mysterious River of Existence rushes on: a new Billow thereof has arrived, and lashes wildly as ever round the old embankments; but the former Billow with *its* loud, mad eddyings, where is it?—Where!—Now this Book of Boswell's, this is precisely a revocation of the edict of Destiny; so that Time shall not utterly, not so soon by several centuries, have dominion over us. A little row of Naphtha-lamps, with its line

of Naphtha-light, burns clear and holy through the dead Night of the Past: they who are gone are still here; though hidden they are revealed, though dead they yet speak. There it shines, that little miraculously lamplit Pathway; shedding its feebler and feebler twilight into the boundless dark Oblivion,—for all that our Johnson *touched* has become illuminated for us: on which miraculous little Pathway we can still travel, and see wonders.

It is not speaking with exaggeration, but with strict measured sobriety, to say that this Book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the *History of England* during those days than twenty other Books, falsely entitled 'Histories,' which take to themselves that special aim. What good is it to me though innumerable Smolletts and Belshams keep dinning in my ears that a man named George the Third was born and bred up, and a man named George the Second died; that Walpole, and the Pelhams, and Chatham, and Rockingham, and Shelburne, and North, with their Coalition or their Separation Ministries, all ousted one another; and vehemently scrambled for 'the thing they called the Rudder of Government, but which 'was in reality the Spigot of Taxation'? That debates were held, and infinite jarring and jargoning took place; and road-bills and enclosure-bills, and game-bills and India-bills, and Laws which no man can number, which happily few men needed to trouble their heads with beyond the passing moment, were enacted, and printed by the King's Stationer? That he who sat in Chancery, and rayed-out speculation from the Woolsack, was now a man that squinted, now a man that did not squint? To the hungry and thirsty mind all this avails next to nothing. These men and these things, we indeed know, did swim, by strength or by specific levity, as apples or as horse-dung, on the top of the current: but is it by painfully noting the courses, eddyings and bobbings hither and thither of such drift-articles, that you will unfold to me the nature of the current itself; of that mighty-rolling, loud-roaring Life-current, bottomless as the foundations of the Universe, mysterious as its Author? The thing I want to see is not Redbook Lists, and Court Calendars, and Parliamentary Registers, but the LIFE OF MAN in England: what men did, thought, suffered, enjoyed; the form, especially the spirit, of their terrestrial existence, its outward environment,

its inward principle; *how* and *what* it was; whence it proceeded, whither it was tending.

Mournful, in truth, is it to behold what the business called 'History,' in these so enlightened and illuminated times, still continues to be. Can you gather from it, read till your eyes go out, any dimmest shadow of an answer to that great question: How men lived and had their being; were it but economically, as, what wages they got, and what they bought with these? Unhappily you cannot. History will throw no light on any such matter. At the point where living memory fails, it is all darkness; Mr. Senior and Mr. Sadler must still debate this simplest of all elements in the condition of the Past: Whether men were better off, in their mere larders and pantries, or were worse off than now! History, as it stands all bound up in gilt volumes, is but a shade more instructive than the wooden volumes of a Backgammon-board. How my Prime Minister was appointed is of less moment to me than How my House Servant was hired. In these days, ten ordinary Histories of Kings and Courtiers were well exchanged against the tenth part of one good History of Booksellers.

For example, I would fain know the History of Scotland: who can tell it me? "Robertson," say innumerable voices; "Robertson against the world." I open Robertson; and find there, through long ages too confused for narrative, and fit only to be presented in the way of epitome and distilled essence, a cunning answer and hypothesis, not to this question: By whom, and by what means, when and how, was this fair broad Scotland, with its Arts and Manufactures, Temples, Schools, Institutions, Poetry, Spirit, National Character, created, and made arable, verdant, peculiar, great, here as I can see some fair section of it lying, kind and strong (like some Bacchus-tamed Lion), from the Castle-hill of Edinburgh?—but to this other question: How did the King keep himself alive in those old days; and restrain so many Butcher-Barons and ravenous Henchmen from utterly extirpating one another, so that killing went on in some sort of moderation? In the one little Letter of Æneas Sylvius, from old Scotland, there is more of History than in all this.—At length, however, we come to a luminous age, interesting enough; to the age of the Reformation. All Scotland is awakened to a second higher life: the Spirit of the

Highest stirs in every bosom, agitates every bosom; Scotland is convulsed, fermenting, struggling to body itself forth anew. To the herdsman, among his cattle in remote woods; to the craftsman, in his rude, heath-thatched workshop, among his rude guild-brethren; to the great and to the little, a new light has arisen: in town and hamlet groups are gathered, with eloquent looks, and governed or ungovernable tongues; the great and the little go forth together to do battle for the Lord against the mighty. We ask, with breathless eagerness: How was it; how went it on? Let us understand it, let us see it, and know it!—In reply, is handed us a really graceful and most dainty little Scandalous Chronicle (as for some Journal of Fashion) of two persons: Mary Stuart, a Beauty, but over light-headed; and Henry Darnley, a Booby who had fine legs. How these first courted, billed and cooed, according to nature; then pouted, fretted, grew utterly enraged, and blew one another up with gunpowder: this, and not the History of Scotland, is what we goodnaturedly read. Nay, by other hands, something like a horse-load of other Books have been written to prove that it was the Beauty who blew up the Booby, and that it was not she. Who or what it was, the thing once for all *being* so effectually done, concerns us little. To know Scotland, at that great epoch, were a valuable increase of knowledge: to know poor Darnley, and see him with burning candle, from centre to skin, were no increase of knowledge at all.—Thus is History written.

Hence, indeed, comes it that History, which should be 'the essence of innumerable Biographies,' will tell us, question it as we like, less than one genuine Biography may do, pleasantly and of its own accord! The time is approaching when History will be attempted on quite other principles; when the Court, the Senate and the Battlefield, receding more and more into the background, the Temple, the Workshop and Social Hearth will advance more and more into the foreground; and History will not content itself with shaping some answer to that question: How were men *taxed* and *kept quiet* then? but will seek to answer this other infinitely wider and higher question: How and what *were men* then? Not our Government only, or the '*House* wherein our life was led,' but the *Life* itself we led there, will be inquired into. Of which latter it may be found that Government, in any modern sense of the word, is after

all but a secondary condition: in the mere sense of *Taxation* and *Keeping quiet*, a small, almost a pitiful one.—Meanwhile let us welcome such Boswells, each in his degree, as bring us any genuine contribution, were it never so inadequate, so inconsiderable.

An exception was early taken against this *Life of Johnson*, and all similar enterprises, which we here recommend; and has been transmitted from critic to critic, and repeated in their several dialects, uninterruptedly, ever since: That such jottings-down of careless conversation are an infringement of social privacy; a crime against our highest Freedom, the Freedom of man's intercourse with man. To this accusation, which we have read and heard oftener than enough, might it not be well for once to offer the flattest contradiction, and plea of *Not at all guilty?* Not that conversation is noted down, but that conversation should not deserve noting down, is the evil. Doubtless, if conversation be falsely recorded, then is it simply a Lie; and worthy of being swept, with all despatch, to the Father of Lies. But if, on the other hand, conversation can be authentically recorded, and any one is ready for the task, let him by all means proceed with it; let conversation be kept in remembrance to the latest date possible. Nay, should the consciousness that a man may be among us 'taking notes' tend, in any measure, to restrict those floods of idle insincere *speech*, with which the *thought* of mankind is wellnigh drowned,—were it other than the most indubitable benefit? He who speaks honestly cares not, needs not care, though his words be preserved to remotest time: for him who speaks *dis*honestly, the fittest of all punishments seems to be this same, which the nature of the case provides. The dishonest speaker, not he only who purposely utters falsehoods, but he who does not purposely, and with sincere heart, utter Truth, and Truth alone; who babbles he knows not what, and has clapped no bridle on his tongue, but lets it run racket, ejecting chatter and futility,—is among the most indisputable malefactors omitted, or inserted, in the Criminal Calendar. To him that will well consider it, idle speaking is precisely the beginning of all Hollowness, Halfness, *Infidelity* (want of Faithfulness); the genial atmosphere in which rank weeds of every kind attain the mastery over noble fruits in man's life, and utterly choke them out: one of

the most crying maladies of these days, and to be testified against, and in all ways to the uttermost withstood. Wise, of a wisdom far beyond our shallow depth, was that old precept: *Watch thy tongue;* out of it are the issues of Life! 'Man is properly an *incarnated word:*' the *word* that he speaks is the *man* himself. Were eyes put into our head, that we might *see;* or only that we might fancy, and plausibly pretend, we had *seen?* Was the tongue suspended there, that it might tell truly what we had seen, and make man the soul's-brother of man; or only that it might utter vain sounds, jargon, soul-confusing, and so *divide* man, as by enchanted walls of Darkness, from union with man? Thou who wearest that cunning, heaven-made organ, a Tongue, think well of this. Speak not, I passionately entreat thee, till thy thought hath silently matured itself, till thou have other than mad and mad-making noises to emit: *hold thy tongue* (thou hast it a-holding) till *some* meaning lie behind, to set it wagging. Consider the significance of SILENCE: it is boundless, never by meditating to be exhausted; unspeakably profitable to thee! Cease that chaotic hubbub, wherein thy own soul runs to waste, to confused suicidal dislocation and stupor: out of Silence comes thy strength. 'Speech is silvern, Silence is golden; Speech is human, Silence is divine.' Fool! thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there with ass-skin and blacklead to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is harmless? Nothing dies, nothing can die. No idlest word thou speakest but is a seed cast into Time, and grows through all Eternity! The Recording Angel, consider it well, is no fable, but the truest of truths: the paper tablets thou canst burn; of the 'iron leaf' there is no burning.—Truly, if we can permit God Almighty to note down our conversation, thinking it good enough for Him,—any poor Boswell need not scruple to work his will of it.

Leaving now this our English *Odyssey*, with its Singer and Scholiast, let us come to the *Ulysses;* that great Samuel Johnson himself, the far-experienced, 'much-enduring man,' whose labours and pilgrimage are here sung. A full-length image of his Existence has been preserved for us: and he, perhaps of all living Englishmen, was the one who best deserved that honour. For if it is true, and now almost proverbial, that 'the Life of the

'lowest mortal, if faithfully recorded, would be interesting to the 'highest;' how much more when the mortal in question was already distinguished in fortune and natural quality, so that his thinkings and doings were not significant of himself only, but of large masses of mankind! 'There is not a man whom 'I meet on the streets,' says one, 'but I could like, were it 'otherwise convenient, to know his Biography:' nevertheless, could an enlightened curiosity be so far gratified, it must be owned the Biography of most ought to be, in an extreme degree, *summary*. In this world, there is so wonderfully little self-subsistence among men; next to no originality (though never absolutely *none*): one Life is too servilely the copy of another; and so in whole thousands of them you find little that is properly new; nothing but the old song sung by a new voice, with better or worse execution, here and there an ornamental quaver, and false notes enough: but the fundamental tune is ever the same; and for the *words*, these, all that they meant stands written generally on the Churchyard-stone: *Natus sum; esuriebam, quærebam; nunc repletus requiesco.* Mankind sail their Life-voyage in huge fleets, following some single whale-fishing or herring-fishing Commodore: the log-book of each differs not, in essential purport, from that of any other: nay the most have no legible log-book (reflection, observation not being among their talents); keep no reckoning, only *keep in sight* of the flagship,—and fish. Read the Commodore's Papers (know *his* Life); and even your lover of that street Biography will have learned the most of what he sought after.

Or, the servile *imitancy*, and yet also a nobler relationship and mysterious union to one another which lies in such imitancy, of Mankind might be illustrated under the different figure, itself nowise *original*, of a Flock of Sheep. Sheep go in flocks for three reasons: First, because they are of a gregarious temper, and *love* to be together: Secondly, because of their cowardice; they are afraid to be left alone: Thirdly, because the common run of them are dull of sight, to a proverb, and can have no choice in roads; sheep can in fact *see* nothing; in a celestial Luminary, and a scoured pewter Tankard, would discern only that both dazzled them, and were of unspeakable glory. How like their fellow-creatures of the

human species! Men too, as was from the first maintained here, are gregarious; then surely faint-hearted enough, trembling to be left by themselves; above all, dull-sighted, down to the verge of utter blindness. Thus are we seen ever running in torrents, and mobs, if we run at all; and after what foolish scoured Tankards, mistaking them for Suns! Foolish Turnip-lanterns likewise, to all appearance supernatural, keep whole nations quaking, their hair on end. Neither know we, except by blind habit, where the good pastures lie: solely when the sweet grass is between our teeth, we know it, and chew it; also when grass is bitter and scant, we know it,—and bleat and butt: these last two facts we know of a truth and in very deed. Thus do Men and Sheep play their parts on this Nether Earth; wandering restlessly in large masses, they know not whither; for most part, each following his neighbour, and his own nose.

Nevertheless, not always; look better, you shall find certain that do, in some small degree, *know whither*. Sheep have their Bell-wether; some ram of the folds, endued with more valour, with clearer vision than other sheep; he leads them through the wolds, by height and hollow, to the woods and water-courses, for covert or for pleasant provender; courageously marching, and if need be leaping, and with hoof and horn doing battle, in the van: him they courageously and with assured heart follow. Touching it is, as every herdsman will inform you, with what chivalrous devotedness these woolly Hosts adhere to their Wether; and rush after him, through good report and through bad report, were it into safe shelters and green thymy nooks, or into asphaltic lakes and the jaws of devouring lions. Ever also must we recall that fact which we owe Jean Paul's quick eye: 'If you hold a stick before the Wether, so that he, by 'necessity, leaps in passing you, and then withdraw your stick, 'the Flock will nevertheless all leap as he did; and the thou-'sandth sheep shall be found impetuously vaulting over air, as 'the first did over an otherwise impassable barrier.' Reader, wouldst thou understand Society, ponder well those ovine proceedings; thou wilt find them all curiously significant.

Now if sheep always, how much more must men always, have their Chief, their Guide! Man too is by nature quite thoroughly *gregarious:* nay ever he struggles to be something more, to be *social;* not even when Society has become impos-

sible, does that deep-seated tendency and effort forsake him. Man, as if by miraculous magic, imparts his Thoughts, his Mood of mind to man; an unspeakable communion binds all past, present and future men into one indissoluble whole, almost into one living individual. Of which high, mysterious Truth, this disposition to *imitate*, to lead and be led, this impossibility *not* to imitate, is the most constant, and one of the simplest manifestations. To imitate! which of us all can measure the significance that lies in that one word? By virtue of which the infant Man, born at Woolsthorpe, grows up not to be a hairy Savage, and chewer of Acorns, but an Isaac Newton and Discoverer of Solar Systems!—Thus both in a celestial and terrestrial sense are we a *Flock*, such as there is no other: nay looking away from the base and ludicrous to the sublime and sacred side of the matter (since in every matter there are two sides), have not we also a SHEPHERD, 'if we will but hear his voice'? Of those stupid multitudes there is no one but has an immortal Soul within him; a reflex and living image of God's whole Universe: strangely, from its dim environment, the light of the Highest looks through him;—for which reason, indeed, it is that we claim a brotherhood with him, and so love to know his History, and come into clearer and clearer union with all that he feels, and says, and does.

However, the chief thing to be noted was this: Amid those dull millions, who, as a dull flock, roll hither and thither, whithersoever they are led; and seem all sightless and slavish, accomplishing, attempting little save what the animal instinct in its somewhat higher kind might teach, To keep themselves and their young ones alive,—are scattered here and there superior natures, whose eye is not destitute of free vision, nor their heart of free volition. These latter, therefore, examine and determine, not what others do, but what it is right to do; towards which, and which only, will they, with such force as is given them, resolutely endeavour: for if the Machine, living or inanimate, is merely *fed*, or desires to be fed, and so *works;* the Person can *will*, and so *do*. These are properly our Men, our Great Men; the guides of the dull host,—which follows them as by an irrevocable decree. They are the chosen of the world: they had this rare faculty not only of 'supposing' and 'inclining to think,' but of *knowing* and *believing;* the nature

of their being was, that they lived not by Hearsay, but by clear Vision; while others hovered and swam along, in the grand Vanity-fair of the World, blinded by the mere Shows of things, these saw into the Things themselves, and could walk as men having an eternal loadstar, and with their feet on sure paths. Thus was there a *Reality* in their existence; something of a perennial character; in virtue of which indeed it is that the memory of them is perennial. Whoso belongs only to his own age, and reverences only *its* gilt Popinjays or soot-smeared Mumbojumbos, must needs die with it: though he have been crowned seven times in the Capitol, or seventy-and-seven times, and Rumour have blown his praises to all the four winds, deafening every ear therewith,—it avails not; there was nothing universal, nothing eternal in him; he must fade away, even as the Popinjay-gildings and Scarecrow-apparel, which he could not see through. The great man does, in good truth, belong to his own age; nay more so than any other man; being properly the synopsis and epitome of such age with its interests and influences: but belongs likewise to all ages, otherwise he is not great. What was transitory in him passes away; and an immortal part remains, the significance of which is in strict speech inexhaustible,—as that of every *real* object is. Aloft, conspicuous, on his enduring basis, he stands there, serene, unaltering; silently addresses to every new generation a new lesson and monition. Well is his Life worth writing, worth interpreting; and ever, in the new dialect of new times, of re-writing and re-interpreting.

Of such chosen men was Samuel Johnson: not ranking among the highest, or even the high, yet distinctly admitted into that sacred band; whose existence was no idle Dream, but a Reality which he transacted *awake;* nowise a Clothes-horse and Patent Digester, but a genuine Man. By nature he was gifted for the noblest of earthly tasks, that of Priesthood, and Guidance of mankind; by destiny, moreover, he was appointed to this task, and did actually, according to strength, fulfil the same: so that always the question, *How; in what spirit; under what shape?* remains for us to be asked and answered concerning him. For as the highest Gospel was a Biography, so is the Life of every good man still an indubitable Gospel, and preaches to the eye and heart and whole man, so

that Devils even must believe and tremble, these gladdest tidings: "Man is heaven-born; not the thrall of Circumstances, of Necessity, but the victorious subduer thereof: behold how he can become the 'Announcer of himself and of his Freedom;' and is ever what the Thinker has named him, 'the Messias of Nature.'"—Yes, Reader, all this that thou hast so often heard about 'force of circumstances,' 'the creature of the time,' 'balancing of motives,' and who knows what melancholy stuff to the like purport, wherein thou, as in a nightmare Dream, sittest paralysed, and hast no force left,—was in very truth, if Johnson and waking men are to be credited, little other than a hag-ridden vision of death-sleep; some *half*-fact, more fatal at times than a whole falsehood. Shake it off; awake; up and be doing, even as it is given thee!

The Contradiction which yawns wide enough in every Life, which it is the meaning and task of Life to reconcile, was in Johnson's wider than in most. Seldom, for any man, has the contrast between the ethereal heavenward side of things, and the dark sordid earthward, been more glaring: whether we look at Nature's work with him or Fortune's, from first to last, heterogeneity, as of sunbeams and miry clay, is on all hands manifest. Whereby indeed, only this was declared, That *much Life* had been given him; many things to triumph over, a great work to *do*. Happily also he did it; better than the most.

Nature had given him a high, keen-visioned, almost poetic soul; yet withal imprisoned it in an inert, unsightly body: he that could never rest had not limbs that would move with him, but only roll and waddle: the inward eye, all-penetrating, all-embracing, must look through bodily windows that were dim, half-blinded; he so loved men, and 'never once *saw* the human face divine'! Not less did he prize the love of men; he was eminently social; the approbation of his fellows was dear to him, 'valuable,' as he owned, 'if from the meanest of human beings:' yet the first impression he produced on every man was to be one of aversion, almost of disgust. By Nature it was farther ordered that the imperious Johnson should be born poor: the ruler-soul, strong in its native royalty, generous, uncontrollable, like the lion of the woods, was to be housed, then, in such a dwelling-place: of Disfigurement, Disease, and lastly of a Poverty which itself made him the servant of servants.

Thus was the born king likewise a born slave: the divine spirit of Music must awake imprisoned amid dull-croaking universal Discords; the Ariel finds himself encased in the coarse hulls of a Caliban. So is it more or less, we know (and thou, O Reader, knowest and feelest even now), with all men: yet with the fewest men in any such degree as with Johnson.

Fortune, moreover, which had so managed his first appearance in the world, lets not her hand lie idle, or turn the other way, but works unweariedly in the same spirit, while he is journeying through the world. What such a mind, stamped of Nature's noblest metal, though in so ungainly a die, was specially and best of all fitted for, might still be a question. To none of the world's few Incorporated Guilds could he have adjusted himself without difficulty, without distortion; in none been a Guild-Brother well at ease. Perhaps, if we look to the strictly practical nature of his faculty, to the strength, decision, method that manifests itself in him, we may say that his calling was rather towards Active than Speculative life; that as Statesman (in the higher, now obsolete sense), Lawgiver, Ruler, in short as Doer of the Work, he had shone even more than as Speaker of the Word. His honesty of heart, his courageous temper, the value he set on things outward and material, might have made him a King among Kings. Had the golden age of those new French Prophets, when it shall be *à chacun selon sa capacité, à chaque capacité selon ses œuvres*, but arrived! Indeed even in our brazen and Birmingham-lacquer age, he himself regretted that he had not become a Lawyer, and risen to be Chancellor, which he might well have done. However, it was otherwise appointed. To no man does Fortune throw open all the kingdoms of this world, and say: It is thine; choose where thou wilt dwell! To the most she opens hardly the smallest cranny or doghutch, and says, not without asperity: There, that is thine while thou canst keep it; nestle thyself there, and bless Heaven! Alas, men must fit themselves into many things: some forty years ago, for instance, the noblest and ablest Man in all the British lands might be seen not swaying the royal sceptre, or the pontiff's censer, on the pinnacle of the World, but gauging ale-tubs in the little burgh of Dumfries! Johnson came a little nearer the mark than Burns: but with him too 'Strength was mournfully

denied its arena;' he too had to fight Fortune at strange odds, all his life long.

Johnson's disposition for *royalty* (had the Fates so ordered it) is well seen in early boyhood. 'His favourites,' says Boswell, 'used to receive very liberal assistance from him; and 'such was the submission and deference with which he was 'treated, that three of the boys, of whom Mr. Hector was 'sometimes one, used to come in the morning as his humble 'attendants, and carry him to school. One in the middle 'stooped, while he sat upon his back, and one on each side 'supported him; and thus was he borne triumphant.' The purfly, sand-blind lubber and blubber, with his open mouth, and face of bruised honeycomb; yet already dominant, imperial, irresistible! Not in the 'King's-chair' (of human arms), as we see, do his three satellites carry him along: rather on the *Tyrant's-saddle*, the back of his fellow-creature, must he ride prosperous!—The child is father of the man. He who had seen fifty years into coming Time, would have felt that little spectacle of mischievous schoolboys to be a great one. For us, who look back on it, and what followed it, now from afar, there arise questions enough: How looked these urchins? What jackets and galligaskins had they; felt headgear, or of dogskin leather? What was old Lichfield doing then; what thinking?—and so on, through the whole series of Corporal Trim's 'auxiliary verbs.' A picture of it all fashions itself together;—only unhappily we have no brush and no fingers.

Boyhood is now past; the ferula of Pedagogue waves harmless, in the distance: Samuel has struggled up to uncouth bulk and youthhood, wrestling with Disease and Poverty, all the way; which two continue still his companions. At College we see little of him; yet thus much, that things went not well. A rugged wildman of the desert, awakened to the feeling of himself; proud as the proudest, poor as the poorest; stoically shut up, silently enduring the incurable: what a world of blackest gloom, with sun-gleams and pale tearful moon-gleams, and flickerings of a celestial and an infernal splendour, was this that now opened for him! But the weather is wintry; and the toes of the man are looking through his shoes. His muddy features grow of a purple and sea-green colour; a flood of black indignation mantling beneath. A truculent,

raw-boned figure! Meat he has probably little; hope he has less: his feet, as we said, have come into brotherhood with the cold mire.

'Shall I be particular,' inquires Sir John Hawkins, 'and relate a circumstance of his distress, that cannot be imputed to him as an effect of his own extravagance or irregularity, and consequently reflects no disgrace on his memory? He had scarce any change of raiment, and, in a short time after Corbet left him, but one pair of shoes, and those so old that his feet were seen through them: a gentleman of his college, the father of an eminent clergyman now living, directed a servitor one morning to place a new pair at the door of Johnson's chamber; who seeing them upon his first going out, so far forgot himself and the spirit which must have actuated his unknown benefactor, that, with all the indignation of an insulted man, he threw them away.'

How exceedingly surprising!—The Rev. Dr. Hall remarks: 'As far as we can judge from a cursory view of the weekly 'account in the buttery-books, Johnson appears to have lived 'as well as other commoners and scholars.' Alas! such 'cursory view of the buttery-books,' now from the safe distance of a century, in the safe chair of a College Mastership, is one thing; the continual view of the empty or locked buttery itself was quite a different thing. But hear our Knight, how he farther discourses. 'Johnson,' quoth Sir John, could 'not at this 'early period of his life divest himself of an idea that poverty 'was disgraceful; and was very severe in his censures of that 'economy in both our Universities, which exacted at meals the 'attendance of poor scholars, under the several denominations 'of Servitors in the one, and Sizers in the other: he thought 'that the scholar's, like the Christian life, levelled all distinc-'tions of rank and worldly preëminence; but in this he was '*mistaken:* civil polity' &c. &c.—Too true! It is man's lot to err.

However, Destiny, in all ways, means to prove the mistaken Samuel, and see what stuff is in him. He must leave these butteries of Oxford, Want like an armed man compelling him; retreat into his father's mean home; and there abandon himself for a season to inaction, disappointment, shame and nervous melancholy nigh run mad: he is probably the wretchedest man in wide England. In all ways he too must 'become perfect through *suffering*.'—High thoughts have visited him; his College Exercises have been praised beyond the walls of Col-

lege; Pope himself has seen that *Translation*, and approved of it: Samuel had whispered to himself: I too am 'one and somewhat.' False thoughts; that leave only misery behind! The fever-fire of Ambition is too painfully extinguished (but not cured) in the frost-bath of Poverty. Johnson has knocked at the gate, as one having a right; but there was no opening: the world lies all encircled as with brass; nowhere can he find or force the smallest entrance. An ushership at Market Bosworth, and 'a disagreement between him and Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of the school,' yields him bread of affliction and water of affliction; but so bitter, that unassisted human nature cannot swallow them. Young Samson will grind no more in the Philistine mill of Bosworth; quits hold of Sir Wolstan, and the 'domestic chaplaincy, so far at least as to say grace at table,' and also to be 'treated with what he represented as intolerable harshness;' and so, after 'some months of such complicated misery,' feeling doubtless that there are worse things in the world than quick death by Famine, 'relinquishes a situation, 'which all his life afterwards he recollected with the strongest 'aversion, and even horror.' Men like Johnson are properly called the Forlorn Hope of the World: judge whether his hope was forlorn or not, by this Letter to a dull oily Printer who called himself *Sylvanus Urban:*

'Sir,—As you appear no less sensible than your readers of the defect of your poetical article, you will not be displeased if (in order to the improvement of it) I communicate to you the sentiments of a person who will undertake, on reasonable terms, sometimes to fill a column.

'His opinion is, that the public would' &c. &c.

'If such a correspondence will be agreeable to you, be pleased to inform me in two posts, what the conditions are on which you shall expect it. Your late offer (for a Prize Poem) gives me no reason to distrust your generosity. If you engage in any literary projects besides this paper, I have other designs to impart.'

Reader, the generous person, to whom this letter goes addressed, is 'Mr. Edmund Cave, at St. John's Gate, London;' the addressor of it is Samuel Johnson, in Birmingham, Warwickshire.

Nevertheless, Life rallies in the man; reasserts its right to be *lived*, even to be enjoyed. 'Better a small bush,' say the Scotch, 'than no shelter:' Johnson learns to be contented with

humble human things; and is there not already an actual realised human Existence, all stirring and living on every hand of him? Go thou and do likewise! In Birmingham itself, with his own purchased goose-quill, he can earn 'five guineas;' nay, finally, the choicest terrestrial good: a Friend, who will be Wife to him! Johnson's marriage with the good Widow Porter has been treated with ridicule by many mortals, who apparently had no understanding thereof. That the purblind, seamy-faced Wild-man, stalking lonely, woe-stricken, like some Irish Gallowglass with peeled club, whose speech no man knew, whose look all men both laughed at and shuddered at, should find any brave female heart to acknowledge, at first sight and hearing of him, "This is the most sensible man I ever met with;" and then, with generous courage, to take him to itself, and say, Be thou mine; be thou warmed here, and thawed to life!—in all this, in the kind Widow's love and pity for him, in Johnson's love and gratitude, there is actually no matter for ridicule. Their wedded life, as is the common lot, was made up of drizzle and dry weather; but innocence and worth dwelt in it; and when death had ended it, a certain sacredness: Johnson's deathless affection for his Tetty was always venerable and noble.

However, be all this as it might, Johnson is now minded to wed; and will live by the trade of Pedagogy, for by this also may life be kept in. Let the world therefore take notice: '*At 'Edial near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are 'boarded, and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by*— 'SAMUEL JOHNSON.' Had this Edial enterprise prospered, how different might the issue have been! Johnson had lived a life of unnoticed nobleness, or swoln into some amorphous Dr. Parr, of no avail to us; Bozzy would have dwindled into official insignificance, or risen by some other elevation; old Auchinleck had never been afflicted with "ane that keeped a schule," or obliged to violate hospitality by a "Cromwell do? God, sir, he gart kings ken that there was a *lith* in their neck!"—But the Edial enterprise did not prosper; Destiny had other work appointed for Samuel Johnson; and young gentlemen got board where they could elsewhere find it. This man was to become a Teacher of grown gentlemen, in the most surprising way; a Man of Letters, and Ruler of the British Nation for some time.

—not of their bodies merely but of their minds, not *over* them but *in* them.

The career of Literature could not, in Johnson's day, any more than now, be said to lie along the shores of a Pactolus: whatever else might be gathered there, gold-dust was nowise the chief produce. The world, from the times of Socrates, St. Paul, and far earlier, has always had its Teachers; and always treated them in a peculiar way. A shrewd Townclerk (not of Ephesus), once, in founding a Burgh-Seminary, when the question came, How the Schoolmasters should be maintained? delivered this brief counsel: "D—n them, keep them *poor!*" Considerable wisdom may lie in this aphorism. At all events, we see, the world has acted on it long, and indeed improved on it,—putting many a Schoolmaster of its great Burgh-Seminary to a death which even *cost* it something. The world, it is true, had for some time been too busy to go out of its way, and *put* any Author to death; however, the old sentence pronounced against them was found to be pretty sufficient. The first Writers, being Monks, were sworn to a vow of Poverty; the modern Authors had no need to swear to it. This was the epoch when an Otway could still die of hunger; not to speak of your innumerable Scrogginses, whom 'the Muse found stretched beneath a rug,' with 'rusty grate unconscious of a fire,' stocking-nightcap, sanded floor, and all the other escutcheons of the craft, time out of mind the heirlooms of Authorship. Scroggins, however, seems to have been but an idler; not at all so diligent as worthy Mr. Boyce, whom we might have seen *sitting up* in bed, with his wearing-apparel of Blanket about him, and a hole slit in the same, that his hand might be at liberty to work in its vocation. The worst was, that too frequently a blackguard recklessness of temper ensued, incapable of turning to account what good the gods even here had provided: your Boyces acted on some stoico-epicurean principle of *carpe diem*, as men do in bombarded towns, and seasons of raging pestilence;—and so had lost not only their life, and presence of mind, but their status as persons of respectability. The trade of Author was at about one of its lowest ebbs when Johnson embarked on it.

Accordingly we find no mention of Illuminations in the city of London, when this same Ruler of the British Nation arrived

in it: no cannon-salvos are fired; no flourish of drums and trumpets greets his appearance on the scene. He enters quite quietly, with some copper halfpence in his pocket; creeps into lodgings in Exeter Street, Strand; and has a Coronation Pontiff also, of not less peculiar equipment, whom, with all submissiveness, he must wait upon, in his Vatican of St. John's Gate. This is the dull oily Printer alluded to above.

'Cave's temper,' says our Knight Hawkins, 'was phlegmatic: though he assumed, as the publisher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of those qualities that constitute urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this question, which he once put to an author: "Mr. ——, I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it upon the subject of music: did you write that yourself?" His discernment was also slow; and as he had already at his command some writers of prose and verse, who, in the language of Booksellers, are called good hands, he was the backwarder in making advances, or courting an intimacy with Johnson. Upon the first approach of a stranger, his practice was to continue sitting; a posture in which he was ever to be found, and for a few minutes to continue silent: if at any time he was inclined to begin the discourse, it was generally by putting a leaf of the Magazine, then in the press, into the hand of his visitor, and asking his opinion of it. * * *

'He was so incompetent a judge of Johnson's abilities, that meaning at one time to dazzle him with the splendour of some of those luminaries in Literature, who favoured him with their correspondence, he told him that if he would, in the evening, be at a certain alehouse in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, he might have a chance of seeing Mr. Browne and another or two of those illustrious contributors: Johnson accepted the invitation; and being introduced by Cave, dressed in a loose horseman's coat, and such a great bushy wig as he constantly wore, to the sight of Mr. Browne, whom he found sitting at the upper end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, had his curiosity gratified.'[3]

In fact, if we look seriously into the condition of Authorship at that period, we shall find that Johnson had undertaken one of the ruggedest of all possible enterprises; that here as elsewhere Fortune had given him unspeakable Contradictions to reconcile. For a man of Johnson's stamp, the Problem was twofold: *First*, not only as the humble but indispensable condition of all else, to keep himself, if so might be, *alive;* but *secondly*, to keep himself alive by speaking forth the *Truth* that

[3] Hawkins, pp. 46-50.

was in him, and speaking it *truly*, that is, in the clearest and fittest utterance the Heavens had enabled him to give it, let the Earth say to this what she liked. Of which twofold Problem if it be hard to solve either member separately, how incalculably more so to solve it, when both are conjoined, and work with endless complication into one another! He that finds himself already *kept alive* can sometimes (unhappily not always) speak a little truth; he that finds himself able and willing, to all lengths, to *speak lies*, may, by watching how the wind sits, scrape together a livelihood, sometimes of great splendour: he, again, who finds himself provided with *neither* endowment, has but a ticklish game to play, and shall have praises if he win it. Let us look a little at both faces of the matter; and see what front they then offered our Adventurer, what front he offered them.

At the time of Johnson's appearance on the field, Literature, in many senses, was in a transitional state; chiefly in this sense, as respects the pecuniary subsistence of its cultivators. It was in the very act of passing from the protection of Patrons into that of the Public; no longer to supply its necessities by laudatory Dedications to the Great, but by judicious Bargains with the Booksellers. This happy change has been much sung and celebrated; many a 'lord of the lion heart and eagle eye' looking back with scorn enough on the bygone system of Dependency: so that now it were perhaps well to consider, for a moment, what good might also be in it, what gratitude we owe it. That a good was in it, admits not of doubt. Whatsoever has existed has had its value: without some truth and worth lying in it, the thing could not have hung together, and been the organ and sustenance, and method of action, for men that reasoned and were alive. Translate a Falsehood which is wholly false into Practice, the result comes out *zero*; there is no fruit or issue to be derived from it. That in an age, when a Nobleman was still noble, still with his wealth the protector of worthy and humane things, and still venerated as such, a poor Man of Genius, his brother in nobleness, should, with unfeigned reverence, address him and say: "I have found Wisdom here, and would fain proclaim it abroad; wilt thou, of thy abundance, afford me the means?"—in all this there was no baseness; it was wholly an honest proposal, which a

free man might make, and a free man listen to. So might a Tasso, with a *Gerusalemme* in his hand or in his head, speak to a Duke of Ferrara; so might a Shakspeare to his Southampton; and Continental Artists generally to their rich Protectors,—in some countries, down almost to these days. It was only when the reverence became *feigned*, that baseness entered into the transaction on both sides; and, indeed, flourished there with rapid luxuriance, till that became disgraceful for a Dryden, which a Shakspeare could once practise without offence.

Neither, it is very true, was the new way of Bookseller Mæcenasship worthless; which opened itself at this juncture, for the most important of all transport-trades, now when the old way had become too miry and impassable. Remark, moreover, how this second sort of Mæcenasship, after carrying us through nearly a century of Literary Time, appears now to have wellnigh discharged *its* function also; and to be working pretty rapidly towards some *third* method, the exact conditions of which are yet nowise visible. Thus all things have their end; and we should part with them all, not in anger, but in peace. The Bookseller-System, during its peculiar century, the whole of the eighteenth, did carry us handsomely along; and many good Works it has left us, and many good Men it maintained: if it is now expiring by PUFFERY, as the Patronage-System did by FLATTERY (for *Lying* is ever the forerunner of Death, nay is itself Death), let us not forget its benefits; how it nursed Literature through boyhood and school-years, as Patronage had wrapped it in soft swaddling-bands;—till now we see it about to put on the *toga virilis*, could it but *find* any such!

There is tolerable travelling on the beaten road, run how it may; only on the new road not yet levelled and paved, and on the old road all broken into ruts and quagmires, is the travelling bad or impracticable. The difficulty lies always in the *transition* from one method to another. In which state it was that Johnson now found Literature; and out of which, let us also say, he manfully carried it. What remarkable mortal *first paid copyright* in England we have not ascertained; perhaps, for almost a century before, some scarce visible or ponderable pittance of wages had occasionally been yielded by the Seller

of Books to the Writer of them: the original Covenant, stipulating to produce *Paradise Lost* on the one hand, and *Five Pounds Sterling* on the other, still lies (we have been told) in black-on-white, for inspection and purchase by the curious, at a Bookshop in Chancery Lane. Thus had the matter gone on, in a mixed confused way, for some threescore years;—as ever, in such things, the old system *overlaps* the new, by some generation or two, and only dies quite out when the new has got a complete organisation and weather-worthy surface of its own. Among the first Authors, the very first of any significance, who lived by the day's wages of his craft, and composedly faced the world on that basis, was Samuel Johnson.

At the time of Johnson's appearance there were still two ways, on which an Author might attempt proceeding: there were the Mæcenases proper in the West End of London; and the Mæcenases virtual of St. John's Gate and Paternoster Row. To a considerate man it might seem uncertain which method were preferable: neither had very high attractions; the Patron's aid was now wellnigh *necessarily* polluted by sycophancy, before it could come to hand; the Bookseller's was deformed with greedy stupidity, not to say entire wooden-headedness and disgust (so that an Osborne even required to be knocked down, by an author of spirit), and could barely keep the thread of life together. The one was the wages of suffering and poverty; the other, unless you gave strict heed to it, the wages of sin. In time, Johnson had opportunity of looking into both methods, and ascertaining what they were; but found, at first trial, that the former would in nowise do for him. Listen, once again, to that far-famed Blast of Doom, proclaiming into the ear of Lord Chesterfield, and, through him, of the listening world, that patronage should be no more!

'Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my Work[4] through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance,[5] one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour.

[4] The *English Dictionary*.

[5] Were time and printer's space of no value, it were easy to wash away certain foolish soot-stains dropped here as 'Notes;' especially two: the one

'The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

'Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it. I hope, it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

'Having carried on my Work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less: for I have long been awakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

'My Lord, your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

And thus must the rebellious 'Sam. Johnson' turn him to the Bookselling guild, and the wondrous chaos of 'Author by trade;' and, though ushered into it only by that dull oily Printer, 'with loose horseman's coat and such a great bushy wig as he 'constantly wore,' and only as subaltern to some commanding-officer 'Browne, sitting amid tobacco-smoke at the head of a long table in the alehouse at Clerkenwell,'—gird himself together for the warfare; having no alternative!

Little less contradictory was that other branch of the two-fold Problem now set before Johnson: the speaking forth of *Truth*. Nay taken by itself, it had in those days become so complex as to puzzle strongest heads, with nothing else imposed on them for solution; and even to turn high heads of that sort into mere hollow *vizards*, speaking neither truth nor falsehood, nor anything but what the Prompter and Player (ὑποκριτὴς) put into them. Alas! for poor Johnson Contradiction abounded; in spirituals and in temporals, within and without. Born with

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on this word, and on Boswell's Note to it; the other on the paragraph which follows. Let 'ED.' look a second time; he will find that Johnson's sacred regard for *Truth* is the only thing to be 'noted' in the former case; also, in the latter, that this of 'Love's being a native of the rocks' actually *has* a 'meaning.'

the strongest unconquerable love of just Insight, he must begin to live and learn in a scene where Prejudice flourishes with rank luxuriance. England was all confused enough, sightless and yet restless, take it where you would; but figure the best intellect in England nursed up to manhood in the idol-cavern of a poor Tradesman's house, in the cathedral city of Lichfield! What is Truth? said jesting Pilate. What is Truth? might earnest Johnson much more emphatically say. Truth, no longer, like the Phœnix, in rainbow plumage, poured, from her glittering beak, such tones of sweetest melody as took captive every ear: the Phœnix (waxing old) had wellnigh ceased her singing, and empty wearisome Cuckoos, and doleful monotonous Owls, innumerable Jays also, and twittering Sparrows on the housetop, pretended they were repeating her.

It was wholly a divided age, that of Johnson; Unity existed nowhere, in its Heaven, or in its Earth. Society, through every fibre, was rent asunder: all things, it was then becoming visible, but could not then be understood, were moving onwards, with an impulse received ages before, yet now first with a decisive rapidity, towards that great chaotic gulf, where, whether in the shape of French Revolutions, Reform Bills, or what shape soever, bloody or bloodless, the descent and engulfment assume, we now see them weltering and boiling. Already Cant, as once before hinted, had begun to play its wonderful part, for the hour was come: two ghastly Apparitions, unreal *simulacra* both, HYPOCRISY and ATHEISM are already, in silence, parting the world. Opinion and Action, which should live together as wedded pair, 'one flesh,' more properly as Soul and Body, have commenced their open quarrel, and are suing for a separate maintenance,—as if they could exist separately. To the earnest mind, in any position, firm footing and a life of Truth was becoming daily more difficult: in Johnson's position it was more difficult than in almost any other.

If, as for a devout nature was inevitable and indispensable, he looked up to Religion, as to the polestar of his voyage, already there was no *fixed* polestar any longer visible; but two stars, a whole constellation of stars, each proclaiming itself as the true. There was the red portentous comet-star of Infidelity; the dim fixed-star, burning ever dimmer, uncertain now whether not an atmospheric *meteor*, of Orthodoxy: which

of these to choose? The keener intellects of Europe had, almost without exception, ranged themselves under the former: for some half century, it had been the general effort of European speculation to proclaim that Destruction of Falsehood was the only Truth; daily had Denial waxed stronger and stronger, Belief sunk more and more into decay. From our Bolingbrokes and Tolands the sceptical fever had passed into France, into Scotland; and already it smouldered, far and wide, secretly eating out the heart of England. Bayle had played his part; Voltaire on a wider theatre, was playing his, —Johnson's senior by some fifteen years: Hume and Johnson were children almost of the same year.[6] To this keener order of intellects did Johnson's indisputably belong: was he to join them; was he to oppose them? A complicated question: for, alas, the Church itself is no longer, even to him, wholly of true adamant, but of adamant and baked mud conjoined: the zealously Devout has to find his Church tottering; and pause amazed to see, instead of inspired Priest, many a swine-feeding Trulliber ministering at her altar. It is not the least curious of the incoherences which Johnson had to reconcile, that, though by nature contemptuous and incredulous, he was, at that time of day, to find his safety and glory in defending, with his whole might, the traditions of the elders.

Not less perplexingly intricate, and on both sides hollow or questionable, was the aspect of Politics. Whigs struggling blindly forward, Tories holding blindly back; each with some forecast of a half truth; neither with any forecast of the whole! Admire here this other Contradiction in the life of Johnson; that, though the most ungovernable, and in practice the most independent of men, he must be a Jacobite, and worshipper of the Divine Right. In Politics also there are Irreconcilables enough for him. As, indeed, how could it be otherwise? For when Religion is torn asunder, and the very heart of man's existence set against itself, then in all subordinate departments there must needs be hollowness, incoherence. The English Nation had rebelled against a Tyrant; and, by the hands of religious tyrannicides, exacted stern vengeance of him: Democracy had risen iron-sinewed, and, 'like an infant Hercules, strangled serpents in its cradle.' But as yet none knew the

[6] Johnson, September 1709; Hume, April 1711.

meaning or extent of the phenomenon: Europe was not ripe for it; not to be ripened for it but by the culture and various experience of another century and a half. And now, when the King-killers were all swept away, and a milder *second* picture was painted over the canvas of the *first*, and betitled 'Glorious Revolution,' who doubted but the catastrophe was over, the whole business finished, and Democracy gone to its long sleep? Yet was it like a business finished and not finished; a lingering uneasiness dwelt in all minds: the deep-lying, resistless Tendency, which had still to be *obeyed*, could no longer be *recognised;* thus was there halfness, insincerity, uncertainty in men's ways; instead of heroic Puritans and heroic Cavaliers, came now a dawdling set of argumentative Whigs, and a dawdling set of deaf-eared Tories; each half-foolish, each half-false. The Whigs were false and without basis; inasmuch as their whole object was Resistance, Criticism, Demolition,—they knew not why, or towards what issue. In Whiggism, ever since a Charles and his Jeffries had ceased to meddle with it, and to have any Russel or Sydney to meddle with, there could be no divineness of character; not till, in these latter days, it took the figure of a thorough-going, all-defying Radicalism, was there any solid footing for it to stand on. Of the like uncertain, half-hollow nature had Toryism become, in Johnson's time; preaching forth indeed an everlasting truth, the duty of Loyalty; yet now, ever since the final expulsion of the Stuarts, having no *Person*, but only an *Office* to be loyal to; no living *Soul* to worship, but only a dead velvet-cushioned *Chair*. Its attitude, therefore, was stiff-necked refusal to move; as that of Whiggism was clamorous command to move,—let rhyme and reason, on both hands, say to it what they might. The consequence was: Immeasurable floods of contentious jargon, tending nowhither; false conviction; false resistance to conviction; decay (ultimately to become decease) of whatsoever was once understood by the words, *Principle*, or *Honesty* of heart; the louder and louder triumph of *Half*ness and Plausibility over *Whole*ness and Truth;—at last, this all-overshadowing efflorescence of QUACKERY, which we now see, with all its deadening and killing fruits, in all its innumerable branches, down to the lowest. How, between these jarring extremes, wherein the rotten lay so inextricably intermingled with the sound, and as

yet no eye could see through the ulterior meaning of the matter, was a faithful and true man to adjust himself?

That Johnson, in spite of all drawbacks, adopted the Conservative side; stationed himself as the unyielding opponent of Innovation, resolute to hold fast the form of sound words, could not but increase, in no small measure, the difficulties he had to strive with. We mean, the *moral* difficulties; for in *economical* respects, it might be pretty equally balanced; the Tory servant of the Public had perhaps about the same chance of promotion as the Whig: and all the promotion Johnson aimed at was the privilege *to live*. But, for what, though unavowed, was no less indispensable, for his peace of conscience, and the clear ascertainment and feeling of his Duty as an inhabitant of God's world, the case was hereby rendered much more complex. To resist Innovation is easy enough on one condition: that you resist Inquiry. This is, and was, the common expedient of your common Conservatives; but it would not do for Johnson: he was a zealous recommender and practiser of Inquiry; once for all, could not and would not believe, much less speak and act, a Falsehood: the *form* of sound words, which he held fast, must have a *meaning* in it. Here lay the difficulty: to behold a portentous mixture of True and False, and feel that he must dwell and fight there; yet to love and defend only the True. How worship, when you cannot and will not be an idolater; yet cannot help discerning that the Symbol of your Divinity has half become idolatrous? This was the question, which Johnson, the man both of clear eye and devout believing heart, must answer, —at peril of his life. The Whig or Sceptic, on the other hand, had a much simpler part to play. To him only the idolatrous side of things, nowise the divine one, lay visible: not *worship*, therefore, nay in the strict sense not heart-honesty, only at most lip- and hand-honesty, is required of him. What spiritual force is his, he can conscientiously employ in the work of cavilling, of pulling-down what is False. For the rest, that there is or can be any Truth of a higher than sensual nature, has not occurred to him. The utmost, therefore, that he as man has to aim at, is RESPECTABILITY, the suffrages of his fellow-men. Such suffrages he may weigh as well as count: or count only: according as he is a Burke or a Wilkes. But beyond these there lies nothing divine for him; these attained, all is attained.

Thus is his whole world distinct and rounded-in; a clear goal is set before him; a firm path, rougher or smoother; at worst a firm region wherein to seek a path: let him gird-up his loins, and travel on without misgivings! For the honest Conservative, again, nothing is distinct, nothing rounded-in: RESPECTABILITY can nowise be his highest Godhead; not one aim, but two conflicting aims to be continually reconciled by him, has he to strive after. A difficult position, as we said; which accordingly the most did, even in those days, but half defend: by the surrender, namely, of their own too cumbersome *honesty*, or even *understanding;* after which the completest defence was worth little. Into this difficult position Johnson, nevertheless, threw himself: found it indeed full of difficulties; yet held it out manfully, as an honest-hearted, open-sighted man, while life was in him.

Such was that same 'twofold Problem' set before Samuel Johnson. Consider all these moral difficulties; and add to them the fearful aggravation, which lay in that other circumstance, that he needed a continual appeal to the Public, must continually produce a certain impression and conviction on the Public; that if he did not, he ceased to have 'provision for the day that was passing over him,' he could not any longer live! How a vulgar character, once launched into this wild element; driven onwards by Fear and Famine; without other aim than to clutch what Provender (of Enjoyment in any kind) he could get, always if possible keeping *quite* clear of the Gallows and Pillory, that is to say, minding heedfully both 'person' and 'character,'—would have floated hither and thither in it; and contrived to eat some three repasts daily, and wear some three suits yearly, and then to depart and disappear, having consumed his last ration: all this might be worth knowing, but were in itself a trivial knowledge. How a noble man, resolute for the Truth, to whom Shams and Lies were once for all an abomination, was to act in it: *here* lay the mystery. By what methods, by what gifts of eye and hand, does a heroic Samuel Johnson, now when cast forth into that waste Chaos of Authorship, maddest of things, a mingled Phlegethon and Fleet-ditch, with its floating lumber, and sea-krakens, and mud-spectres,—shape himself a voyage; of the *transient* driftwood, and the *enduring* iron, build him a sea-worthy Life-boat, and

sail therein, undrowned, unpolluted, through the roaring 'mother of dead dogs,' onwards to an eternal Landmark, and City that hath foundations? This high question is even the one answered in Boswell's Book; which Book we therefore, not so falsely, have named a *Heroic Poem;* for in it there lies the whole argument of such. Glory to our brave Samuel! He accomplished this wonderful Problem; and now through long generations we point to him, and say: Here also was a Man; let the world once more have assurance of a Man!

Had there been in Johnson, now when afloat on that confusion worse confounded of grandeur and squalor, no light but an earthly outward one, he too must have made shipwreck. With his diseased body, and vehement voracious heart, how easy for him to become a *carpe-diem* Philosopher, like the rest, and live and die as miserably as any Boyce of that Brotherhood! But happily there was a higher light for him; shining as a lamp to his path; which, in all paths, would teach him to act and walk not as a fool, but as wise, and in those evil days too 'redeeming the time.' Under dimmer or clearer manifestations, a Truth had been revealed to him: I also am a Man; even in this unutterable element of Authorship, I may live as beseems a Man! That Wrong is not only different from Right, but that it is in strict scientific terms *infinitely* different; even as the gaining of the whole world set against the losing of one's own soul, or (as Johnson had it) a Heaven set against a Hell; that in all situations out of the Pit of Tophet, wherein a living Man has stood or can stand, there is actually a Prize of quite *infinite* value placed within his reach, namely a *Duty* for him to do: this highest Gospel, which forms the basis and worth of all other Gospels whatsoever, had been revealed to Samuel Johnson; and the man had believed it, and laid it faithfully to heart. Such knowledge of the *transcendental*, immeasurable character of Duty we call the basis of all Gospels, the essence of all Religion: he who with his whole soul knows not this, as yet knows nothing, as yet *is* properly nothing.

This, happily for him, Johnson was one of those that knew: under a certain authentic Symbol it stood forever present to his eyes: a Symbol, indeed, waxing old as doth a garment; yet which had guided forward, as their Banner and celestial Pillar of Fire, innumerable saints and witnesses, the fathers of our

modern world; and for him also had still a sacred significance. It does not appear that at any time Johnson was what we call irreligious: but in his sorrows and isolation, when hope died away, and only a long vista of suffering and toil lay before him to the end, then first did Religion shine forth in its meek, everlasting clearness; even as the stars do in black night, which in the daytime and dusk were hidden by inferior lights. How a true man, in the midst of errors and uncertainties, shall work out for himself a sure Life-truth; and adjusting the transient to the eternal, amid the fragments of ruined Temples build up, with toil and pain, a little Altar for himself, and worship there; how Samuel Johnson, in the era of Voltaire, can purify and fortify his soul, and hold real communion with the Highest, 'in the Church of St. Clement Danes:' this too stands all unfolded in his Biography, and is among the most touching and memorable things there; a thing to be looked at with pity, admiration, awe. Johnson's Religion was as the light of life to him; without it his heart was all sick, dark and had no guidance left.

He is now enlisted, or impressed, into that unspeakable shoeblack-seraph Army of Authors; but can feel hereby that he fights under a celestial flag, and will quit him like a man. The first grand requisite, an assured heart, he therefore has: what his outward equipments and accoutrements are, is the next question; an important, though inferior one. His intellectual stock, intrinsically viewed, is perhaps inconsiderable: the furnishings of an English School and English University; good knowledge of the Latin tongue, a more uncertain one of Greek: this is a rather slender stock of Education wherewith to front the world. But then it is to be remembered that his world was England; that such was the culture England commonly supplied and expected. Besides, Johnson has been a voracious reader, though a desultory one, and oftenest in strange scholastic, too obsolete Libraries; he has also rubbed shoulders with the press of Actual Life for some thirty years now: views or hallucinations of innumerable things are weltering to and fro in him. Above all, be his weapons what they may, he has an arm that can wield them. Nature has given him her choicest gift,—an open eye and heart. He will look on the world, wheresoever he can catch a glimpse of it, with eager curiosity: to the last, we find this a striking characteristic of him; for all

human interests he has a sense; the meanest handicraftsman could interest him, even in extreme age, by speaking of his craft: the ways of men are all interesting to him; any human thing, that he did not know, he wished to know. Reflection, moreover, Meditation, was what he practised incessantly, with or without his will: for the mind of the man was earnest, deep as well as humane. Thus would the world, such fragments of it as he could survey, form itself, or continually tend to form itself, into a coherent Whole; on any and on all phases of which, his vote and voice must be well worth listening to. As a Speaker of the Word, he will speak real words; no idle jargon or hollow triviality will issue from him. His aim too is clear, attainable; that of *working for his wages:* let him *do* this honestly, and all else will follow of its own accord.

With such omens, into such a warfare, did Johnson go forth. A rugged hungry Kerne or Gallowglass, as we called him: yet indomitable; in whom lay the true spirit of a Soldier. With giant's force he toils, since such is his appointment, were it but at hewing of wood and drawing of water for old sedentary bushy-wigged Cave; distinguishes himself by mere quantity, if there is to be no other distinction. He can write all things; frosty Latin verses, if these are the saleable commodity; Book-prefaces, Political Philippics, Review Articles, Parliamentary Debates: all things he does rapidly; still more surprising, all things he does thoroughly and well. How he sits there, in his rough-hewn, amorphous bulk, in that upper-room at St. John's Gate, and trundles-off sheet after sheet of those Senate-of-Lilliput Debates, to the clamorous Printer's Devils waiting for them with insatiable throat, down stairs; himself perhaps *impransus* all the while! Admire also the greatness of Literature; how a grain of mustard-seed cast into its Nile-waters, shall settle in the teeming mould, and be found, one day, as a Tree, in whose branches all the fowls of heaven may lodge. Was it not so with these Lilliput Debates? In that small project and act began the stupendous FOURTH ESTATE; whose wide world-embracing influences what eye can take in; in whose boughs are there not already fowls of strange feather lodged? Such things, and far stranger, were done in that wondrous old Portal, even in latter times. And then figure Samuel dining 'behind the screen,' from a trencher covertly handed-in to him, at a pre-

concerted nod from the 'great bushy wig;' Samuel too ragged to show face, yet 'made a happy man of' by hearing his praise spoken. If to Johnson himself, then much more to us, may that St. John's Gate be a place we can 'never pass without veneration.'[7]

Poverty, Distress, and as yet Obscurity, are his companions: so poor is he that his Wife must leave him, and seek shelter among other relations; Johnson's household has accommodation for one inmate only. To all his ever-varying, ever-recurring troubles, moreover, must be added this continual one of ill-health, and its concomitant depressiveness: a galling load, which would have crushed most common mortals into desperation, is his appointed ballast and life-burden; he 'could not

[7] All Johnson's places of resort and abode are venerable, and now indeed to the many as well as to the few; for his name has become great; and, as we must often with a kind of sad admiration recognise, there is, even to the rudest man, no greatness so venerable as intellectual, as spiritual greatness; nay properly there is no other venerable at all. For example, what soul-subduing magic, for the very clown or craftsman of our England, lies in the word 'Scholar'! "He is a Scholar:" he is a man *wiser* than we; of a wisdom to us *boundless*, infinite: who shall speak his worth! Such things, we say, fill us with a certain pathetic admiration of defaced and obstructed yet glorious man; archangel though in ruins,—or rather, though in *rubbish* of encumbrances and mud-incrustations, which also are not to be perpetual.

Nevertheless, in this mad-whirling all-forgetting London, the haunts of the mighty that were can seldom without a strange difficulty be discovered. Will any man, for instance, tell us which *bricks* it was in Lincoln's Inn Buildings that Ben Jonson's hand and trowel laid? No man, it is to be feared,—and also grumbled at. With Samuel Johnson may it prove otherwise! A Gentleman of the British Museum is said to have made drawings of all *his* residences: the blessing of Old Mortality be upon him! We ourselves, not without labour and risk, lately discovered GOUGH SQUARE, between Fleet Street and Holborn (adjoining both to BOLT COURT and to JOHNSON'S COURT); and on the second day of search, the very House there, wherein the *English Dictionary* was composed. It is the first or corner house on the right hand, as you enter through the arched way from the North-west. The actual occupant, an elderly, well-washed, decent-looking man, invited us to enter; and courteously undertook to be *cicerone;* though in his memory lay nothing but the foolishest jumble and hallucination. It is a stout, old-fashioned, oak-balustraded house: "I have spent many a pound and penny on it since then," said the worthy Landlord: "here, you see, this Bedroom was the Doctor's study; that was the garden" (a plot of delved ground somewhat larger than a bed-quilt), "where he walked for exercise; these three garret Bedrooms" (where his three Copyists sat and wrote) "were the place he kept his—*Pupils* in"! *Tempus edax rerum!* Yet *ferax* also: for our friend now added, with a wistful look, which strove to seem merely historical: "I let it all in Lodgings, to respectable gentlemen; by the quarter or the month; it's all one to me."—"To me also," whispered the Ghost of Samuel, as we went pensively our ways.

remember the day he had passed free from pain.' Nevertheless, Life, as we said before, is always Life: a healthy soul, imprison it as you will, in squalid garrets, shabby coat, bodily sickness, or whatever else, will assert its heaven-granted indefeasible Freedom, its right to conquer difficulties, to do work, even to feel gladness. Johnson does not whine over his existence, but manfully makes the most and best of it. 'He said, 'a man might live in a garret at eighteenpence a-week: few 'people would inquire where he lodged; and if they did, it 'was easy to say, "Sir, I am to be found at such a place." By 'spending threepence in a coffee-house, he might be for some 'hours every day in very good company; he might dine for 'sixpence, breakfast on bread-and-milk for a penny, and do 'without supper. On *clean-shirt day* he went abroad and paid 'visits.' Think by whom and of whom this was uttered, and ask then, Whether there is more pathos in it than in a whole circulating-library of *Giaours* and *Harolds*, or less pathos? On another occasion, 'when Dr. Johnson, one day, read his own 'Satire, in which the life of a scholar is painted, with the va-'rious obstructions thrown in his way to fortune and to fame, 'he burst into a passion of tears: Mr. Thrale's family and Mr. 'Scott only were present, who, in a jocose way, clapped him 'on the back, and said, "What's all this, my dear sir? Why, 'you and I and *Hercules*, you know, were all troubled with '*melancholy*." He was a very large man, and made-out the 'triumvirate with Johnson and Hercules comically enough.' These were sweet tears; the sweet victorious remembrance lay in them of toils indeed frightful, yet never flinched from, and now triumphed over. 'One day it shall delight you also to remember labour done!'—Neither, though Johnson is obscure and poor, need the highest enjoyment of existence, that of heart freely communing with heart, be denied him. Savage and he wander homeless through the streets; without bed, yet not without friendly converse; such another conversation not, it is like, producible in the proudest drawing-room of London. Nor, under the void Night, upon the hard pavement, are their own woes the only topic: nowise; they "will stand by their country," they there, the two 'Backwoodsmen' of the Brick Desert!

Of all outward evils Obscurity is perhaps in itself the least. To Johnson, as to a healthy-minded man, the fantastic article,

sold or given under the title of *Fame*, had little or no value but its intrinsic one. He prized it as the means of getting him employment and good wages; scarcely as anything more. His light and guidance came from a loftier source; of which, in honest aversion to all hypocrisy or pretentious talk, he spoke not to men; nay perhaps, being of a *healthy* mind, had never spoken to himself. We reckon it a striking fact in Johnson's history, this carelessness of his to Fame. Most authors speak of their 'Fame' as if it were a quite priceless matter; the grand ultimatum, and heavenly Constantine's-Banner they had to follow, and conquer under.—Thy 'Fame'! Unhappy mortal, where will it and thou both be in some fifty years? Shakspeare himself has lasted but two hundred; Homer (partly by accident) three thousand: and does not already an ETERNITY encircle every *Me* and every *Thee?* Cease, then, to sit feverishly hatching on that 'Fame' of thine; and flapping and shrieking with fierce hisses, like brood-goose on her last egg, if man shall or dare approach it! Quarrel not with me, hate me not, my Brother: make what thou canst of thy egg, and welcome: God knows, I will not steal it; I believe it to be *addle*.—Johnson, for his part, was no man to be killed by a review; concerning which matter, it was said by a benevolent person: If any author *can* be reviewed to death, let it be, with all convenient despatch, *done*. Johnson thankfully receives any word spoken in his favour; is nowise disobliged by a lampoon, but will look at it, if pointed out to him, and show how it might have been done better: the lampoon itself is indeed *nothing*, a soap-bubble that next moment will become a drop of sour suds; but in the mean while, if it do anything, it keeps him more in the world's eye, and the next *bargain* will be all the richer: "Sir, if they should cease to talk of me, I must starve." Sound heart and understanding head: these fail no man, not even a Man of Letters!

Obscurity, however, was, in Johnson's case, whether a light or heavy evil, likely to be no lasting one. He is animated by the spirit of a true *workman*, resolute to do his work well; and he *does* his work well; all his work, that of writing, that of living. A man of this stamp is unhappily not so common in the literary or in any other department of the world, that he can continue always unnoticed. By slow degrees, Johnson emerges; looming, at first, huge and dim in the eye of an observant few;

at last disclosed, in his real proportions, to the eye of the whole world, and encircled with a 'light-nimbus' of glory, so that whoso is not blind must and shall behold him. By slow degrees, we said; for this also is notable; slow but sure: as his fame waxes not by exaggerated clamour of what he *seems* to be, but by better and better insight of what he *is*, so it will last and stand wearing, being genuine. Thus indeed is it always, or nearly always, with true fame. The heavenly Luminary rises amid vapours; stargazers enough must scan it with critical telescopes; it makes no blazing, the world can either look at it, or forbear looking at it; not till after a time and times does its celestial eternal nature become indubitable. Pleasant, on the other hand, is the blazing of a Tarbarrel; the crowd dance merrily round it, with loud huzzaing, universal three-times-three, and, like Homer's peasants, 'bless the useful light:' but unhappily it so soon ends in darkness, foul choking smoke; and is kicked into the gutters, a nameless imbroglio of charred staves, pitch-cinders and *vomissement du diable!*

But indeed, from of old, Johnson has enjoyed all, or nearly all, that Fame can yield any man: the respect, the obedience of those that are about him and inferior to him; of those whose opinion alone can have any forcible impression on him. A little circle gathers round the Wise man; which gradually enlarges as the report thereof spreads, and more can come to see and to believe; for Wisdom is precious, and of irresistible attraction to all. 'An inspired-idiot,' Goldsmith, hangs strangely about him; though, as Hawkins says, 'he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for his parts; and once entreated a friend to desist from praising him, "for in doing so," said he, "you harrow-up my very soul!"' Yet, on the whole, there is no evil in the 'gooseberry-fool;' but rather much good; of a finer, if of a weaker, sort than Johnson's; and all the more genuine that he himself could never become *conscious* of it,—though unhappily never cease *attempting* to become so: the Author of the genuine *Vicar of Wakefield*, nill he, will he, must needs fly towards such a mass of genuine Manhood; and Dr. Minor keep gyrating round Dr. Major, alternately attracted and repelled. Then there is the chivalrous Topham Beauclerk, with his sharp wit, and gallant courtly ways: there is Bennet Langton, an orthodox gentleman, and worthy; though Johnson once laughed,

louder almost than mortal, at his last will and testament ; and ‘ could not stop his merriment, but continued it all the way till ‘ he got without the Temple-gate ; then burst into such a fit of ‘ laughter that he appeared to be almost in a convulsion ; and, ‘ in order to support himself, laid hold of one of the posts at ‘ the side of the foot-pavement, and sent forth peals so loud ‘ that, in the silence of the night, his voice seemed to resound ‘ from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch !’ Lastly comes his solid-thinking, solid-feeding Thrale, the well-beloved man ; with *Thralia*, a bright papilionaceous creature, whom the elephant loved to play with, and wave to and fro upon his trunk. Not to speak of a reverent Bozzy, for what need is there farther ?—Or of the spiritual Luminaries, with tongue or pen, who made that age remarkable ; or of Highland Lairds drinking, in fierce usquebaugh, “ Your health, Doctor Shonson !”—Still less of many such as that poor ‘ Mr. F. Lewis,’ older in date, of whose birth, death and whole terrestrial *res gestæ*, this only, and strange enough this actually, survives : “ Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society !” *Stat* PARVI *nominis umbra.*—

In his fifty-third year he is beneficed, by the royal bounty, with a Pension of three-hundred pounds. Loud clamour is always more or less insane : but probably the insanest of all loud clamours in the eighteenth century was this that was raised about Johnson’s Pension. Men seem to be led by the noses : but in reality, it is by the ears,—as some ancient slaves were, who had their ears bored ; or as some modern quadrupeds may be, whose ears are long. Very falsely was it said, ‘ Names do not change Things.’ Names do change Things ; nay for most part they are the only substance, which mankind can discern in Things. The whole sum that Johnson, during the remaining twenty-two years of his life, drew from the public funds of England, would have supported some Supreme Priest for about half as many weeks ; it amounts very nearly to the revenue of our poorest Church-Overseer for one twelvemonth. Of secular Administrators of Provinces, and Horse-subduers, and Game-destroyers, we shall not so much as speak : but who were the Primates of England, and the Primates of All England, during Johnson’s days ? No man has remembered. Again, is the Primate of all England something, or is he nothing ? If some-

thing, then what but the man who, in the supreme degree, teaches and spiritually edifies, and leads towards Heaven by guiding wisely through the Earth, the living souls that inhabit England? We touch here upon deep matters; which but remotely concern us, and might lead us into still deeper: clear, in the mean while, it is that the true Spiritual Edifier and Soul's-Father of all England was, and till very lately continued to be, the man named Samuel Johnson,—whom this scot-and-lot-paying world cackled reproachfully to see remunerated like a Supervisor of Excise!

If Destiny had beaten hard on poor Samuel, and did never cease to visit him too roughly, yet the last section of his Life might be pronounced victorious, and on the whole happy. He was not idle; but now no longer goaded-on by want; the light which had shone irradiating the dark haunts of Poverty, now illuminates the circles of Wealth, of a certain culture and elegant intelligence; he who had once been admitted to speak with Edmund Cave and Tobacco Browne, now admits a Reynolds and a Burke to speak with him. Loving friends are there; Listeners, even Answerers: the fruit of his long labours lies round him in fair legible Writings, of Philosophy, Eloquence, Morality, Philology; some excellent, all worthy and genuine Works; for which too, a deep, earnest murmur of thanks reaches him from all ends of his Fatherland. Nay there are works of Goodness, of undying Mercy, which even he has possessed the power to do: 'What I gave I have; what I spent I had!' Early friends had long sunk into the grave; yet in his soul they ever lived, fresh and clear, with soft pious breathings towards them, not without a still hope of one day meeting them again in purer union. Such was Johnson's Life: the victorious Battle of a free, true Man. Finally he died the death of the free and true: a dark cloud of Death, solemn and not untinged with haloes of immortal Hope, 'took him away,' and our eyes could no longer behold him; but can still behold the trace and impress of his courageous honest spirit, deep-legible in the World's Business, wheresoever he walked and was.

To estimate the quantity of Work that Johnson performed, how much poorer the World were had it wanted him, can, as in all such cases, never be accurately done; cannot, till after

some longer space, be approximately done. All work is as seed sown; it grows and spreads, and sows itself anew, and so, in endless palingenesia, lives and works. To Johnson's Writings, good and solid, and still profitable as they are, we have already rated his Life and Conversation as superior. By the one and by the other, who shall compute what effects have been produced, and are still, and into deep Time, producing?

So much, however, we can already see: It is now some three quarters of a century that Johnson has been the Prophet of the English; the man by whose light the English people, in public and in private, more than by any other man's, have guided their existence. Higher light than that immediately *practical* one; higher virtue than an honest PRUDENCE, he could not then communicate; nor perhaps could they have received: such light, such virtue, however, he did communicate. How to thread this labyrinthic Time, the fallen and falling Ruin of Times; to silence vain Scruples, hold firm to the last the fragments of old Belief, and with earnest eye still discern some glimpses of a true path, and go forward thereon, 'in a world where there is much to be done, and little to be known:' this is what Samuel Johnson, by act and word, taught his Nation; what his Nation received and learned of him, more than of any other. We can view him as the preserver and transmitter of whatsoever was genuine in the spirit of Toryism; which genuine spirit, it is now becoming manifest, must again embody itself in all new forms of Society, be what they may, that are to exist, and have continuance—elsewhere than on Paper. The *last* in many things, Johnson was the last genuine Tory; the last of Englishmen who, with strong voice and wholly-believing heart, preached the Doctrine of Standing-still; who, without selfishness or slavishness, reverenced the existing Powers, and could assert the privileges of rank, though himself poor, neglected and plebeian; who had heart-devoutness with heart-hatred of cant, was orthodox-religious with his eyes open; and in all things and everywhere spoke out in plain English, from a soul wherein jesuitism could find no harbour, and with the front and tone not of a diplomatist but of a man.

The last of the Tories was Johnson: not Burke, as is often said; Burke was essentially a Whig, and only, on reaching the

verge of the chasm towards which Whiggism from the first was inevitably leading, recoiled; and, like a man vehement rather than earnest, a resplendent far-sighted Rhetorican rather than a deep sure Thinker, recoiled with no measure, convulsively, and damaging what he drove back with him.

In a world which exists by the balance of Antagonisms, the respective merit of the Conservator and the Innovator must ever remain debatable. Great, in the mean while, and undoubted for both sides, is the merit of him who, in a day of Change, walks wisely, honestly. Johnson's aim was in itself an impossible one: this of stemming the eternal Flood of Time; of clutching all things, and anchoring them down, and saying, Move not!—how could it or should it, ever have success? The strongest man can but retard the current partially and for a short hour. Yet even in such shortest retardation may not an inestimable value lie? If England has escaped the blood-bath of a French Revolution; and may yet, in virtue of this delay and of the experience it has given, work out her deliverance calmly into a new Era, let Samuel Johnson, beyond all contemporary or succeeding men, have the praise for it. We said above that he was appointed to be Ruler of the British Nation for a season: whoso will look beyond the surface, into the heart of the world's movements, may find that all Pitt Administrations, and Continental Subsidies, and Waterloo victories, rested on the possibility of making England, yet a little while, *Toryish*, Loyal to the Old; and this again on the anterior reality, that the Wise had found such Loyalty still practicable, and recommendable. England had its Hume, as France had its Voltaires and Diderots; but the Johnson was peculiar to us.

If we ask now, by what endowment it mainly was that Johnson realised such a Life for himself and others; what quality of character the main phenomena of his Life may be most naturally deduced from, and his other qualities most naturally subordinated to, in our conception of him, perhaps the answer were: The quality of Courage, of Valour; that Johnson was a Brave Man. The Courage that can go forth, once and away, to Chalk-Farm, and have itself shot, and snuffed out, with decency, is nowise wholly what we mean here. Such courage we indeed esteem an exceeding small

matter; capable of coexisting with a life full of falsehood, feebleness, poltroonery and despicability. Nay oftener it is Cowardice rather that produces the result: for consider, Is the Chalk-Farm Pistoleer inspired with any reasonable Belief and Determination; or is he hounded-on by haggard indefinable Fear,—how he will be *cut* at public places, and 'plucked geese of the neighbourhood' will wag their tongues at him a plucked goose? If he go then, and be shot without shrieking or audible uproar, it is well for him: nevertheless there is nothing amazing in it. Courage to manage all this has not perhaps been denied to any man, or to any woman. Thus, do not recruiting sergeants drum through the streets of manufacturing towns, and collect ragged losels enough; every one of whom, if once dressed in red, and trained a little, will receive fire cheerfully for the small sum of one shilling *per diem*, and have the soul blown out of him at last, with perfect propriety? The Courage that dares only *die* is on the whole no sublime affair; necessary indeed, yet universal; pitiful when it begins to parade itself. On this Globe of ours there are some thirty-six persons that manifest it, seldom with the smallest failure, during every second of time. Nay look at Newgate: do not the offscourings of Creation, when condemned to the gallows as if they were not men but vermin, walk thither with decency, and even to the scowls and hootings of the whole Universe, give their stern good-night in silence? What is to be undergone only once, we may undergo; what must be, comes almost of its own accord. Considered as Duellist, what a poor figure does the fiercest Irish Whiskerando make in comparison with any English Game-cock, such as you may buy for fifteenpence!

The Courage we desire and prize is not the Courage to die decently, but to live manfully. This, when by God's grace it has been given, lies deep in the soul; like genial heat, fosters all other virtues and gifts; without it they could not live. In spite of our innumerable Waterloos and Peterloos, and such campaigning as there has been, this Courage we allude to, and call the only true one, is perhaps rarer in these last ages than it has been in any other since the Saxon Invasion under Hengist. Altogether extinct it can never be among men; otherwise the species Man were no longer for this world: here and there, in

all times, under various guises, men are sent hither not only to demonstrate but exhibit it, and testify, as from heart to heart, that it is still possible, still practicable.

Johnson, in the eighteenth century, and as Man of Letters, was one of such; and, in good truth, 'the bravest of the brave.' What mortal could have more to war with? Yet, as we saw, he yielded not, faltered not; he fought, and even, such was his blessedness, prevailed. Whoso will understand what it is to have a man's heart may find that, since the time of John Milton, no braver heart had beat in any English bosom than Samuel Johnson now bore. Observe too that he never called himself brave, never felt himself to be so; the more completely *was* so. No Giant Despair, no Golgotha Death-dance or Sorcerer's-Sabbath of 'Literary Life in London,' appals this pilgrim; he works resolutely for deliverance; in still defiance steps stoutly along. The thing that is given him to do, he can make himself do; what is to be endured, he can endure in silence.

How the great soul of old Samuel, consuming daily his own bitter unalleviable allotment of misery and toil, shows beside the poor flimsy little soul of young Boswell; one day flaunting in the ring of vanity, tarrying by the wine-cup and crying, Aha, the wine is red; the next day deploring his downpressed, night-shaded, quite poor estate, and thinking it unkind that the whole movement of the Universe should go on, while *his* digestive-apparatus had stopped! We reckon Johnson's 'talent of silence' to be among his great and too rare gifts. Where there is nothing farther to be done, there shall nothing farther be said: like his own poor blind Welshwoman, he accomplished somewhat, and also 'endured fifty years of wretchedness with unshaken fortitude.' How grim was Life to him; a sick Prison-house and Doubting-castle! 'His great business,' he would profess, 'was to escape from himself.' Yet towards all this he has taken his position and resolution; can dismiss it all 'with frigid indifference, having little to hope or to fear.' Friends are stupid, and pusillanimous, and parsimonious; 'wearied of his stay, yet offended at his departure:' it is the manner of the world. 'By popular delusion,' remarks he with a gigantic calmness, 'illiterate writers will rise into renown:' it is portion of the History of English Literature; a perennial

thing, this same popular delusion; and will—alter the character of the Language.

Closely connected with this quality of Valour, partly as springing from it, partly as protected by it, are the more recognisable qualities of Truthfulness in word and thought, and Honesty in action. There is a reciprocity of influence here: for as the realising of Truthfulness and Honesty is the life-light and great aim of Valour, so without Valour they cannot, in anywise, be realised. Now, in spite of all practical shortcomings, no one that sees into the significance of Johnson will say that his prime object was not Truth. In conversation, doubtless, you may observe him, on occasion, fighting as if for victory;—and must pardon these ebulliences of a careless hour, which were not without temptation and provocation. Remark likewise two things: that such prize-arguings were ever on merely superficial debatable questions; and then that they were argued generally by the fair laws of battle and logic-fence, by one cunning in that same. If their purpose was excusable, their effect was harmless, perhaps beneficial: that of taming noisy mediocrity, and showing it another side of a debatable matter; to see *both* sides of which was, for the first time, to see the Truth of it. In his Writings themselves are errors enough, crabbed prepossessions enough; yet these also of a quite extraneous and accidental nature, nowhere a wilful shutting of the eyes to the Truth. Nay, is there not everywhere a heartfelt discernment, singular, almost admirable, if we consider through what confused conflicting lights and hallucinations it had to be attained, of the highest everlasting Truth, and beginning of all Truths: this namely, that man is ever, and even in the age of Wilkes and Whitefield, a Revelation of God to man; and lives, moves and has his being in Truth only; is either true, or, in strict speech, *is* not at all?

Quite spotless, on the other hand, is Johnson's love of Truth, if we look at it as expressed in Practice, as what we have named Honesty of action. 'Clear your mind of Cant;' *clear* it, throw Cant utterly away: such was his emphatic, repeated precept; and did not he himself faithfully conform to it? The Life of this man has been, as it were, turned inside out, and examined with microscopes by friend and foe; yet was there no Lie found in him. His Doings and Writings are

not *shows* but *performances:* you may weigh them in the balance, and they will stand weight. Not a line, not a sentence is dishonestly done, is other than it pretends to be. Alas! and he wrote not out of inward inspiration, but to earn his wages: and with that grand perennial tide of 'popular delusion' flowing by; in whose waters he nevertheless refused to fish, to whose rich oyster-beds the dive was too muddy for him. Observe, again, with what innate hatred of Cant, he takes for himself, and offers to others, the lowest possible view of his business, which he followed with such nobleness. Motive for writing he had none, as he often said, but money; and yet he wrote *so*. Into the region of Poetic Art he indeed never rose; there was no *ideal* without him avowing itself in his work: the nobler was that unavowed *ideal* which lay within him, and commanded saying, Work out thy Artisanship in the spirit of an Artist! They who talk loudest about the dignity of Art, and fancy that they too are Artistic guild-brethren, and of the Celestials,—let them consider well what manner of man this was, who felt himself to be only a hired day-labourer. A labourer that was worthy of his hire; that has laboured not as an eye-servant, but as one found faithful! Neither was Johnson in those days perhaps wholly a unique. Time was when, for money, you might have ware: and needed not, in all departments, in that of the Epic Poem, in that of the Blacking-bottle, to rest content with the mere *persuasion* that you had ware. It was a happier time. But as yet the seventh Apocalyptic Bladder (of PUFFERY) had not been rent open,—to whirl and grind, as in a West-Indian Tornado, all earthly trades and things into wreck, and dust, and consummation,—and regeneration. Be it quickly, since it must be!—

That Mercy can dwell only with Valour, is an old sentiment or proposition; which in Johnson again receives confirmation. Few men on record have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than old Samuel. He was called the Bear; and did indeed too often look, and roar, like one; being forced to it in his own defence: yet within that shaggy exterior of his there beat a heart warm as a mother's, soft as a little child's. Nay generally, his very roaring was but the anger of affection: the rage of a Bear, if you will; but of a Bear bereaved of her whelps. Touch his Religion, glance at the Church of England,

or the Divine Right; and he was upon you! These things were his Symbols of all that was good and precious for men; his very Ark of the Covenant: whoso laid hand on them tore asunder his heart of hearts. Not out of hatred to the opponent, but of love to the thing opposed, did Johnson grow cruel, fiercely contradictory: this is an important distinction; never to be forgotten in our censure of his conversational outrages. But observe also with what humanity, what openness of love, he can attach himself to all things: to a blind old woman, to a Doctor Levett, to a cat 'Hodge.' 'His thoughts in the latter 'part of his life were frequently employed on his deceased 'friends; he often muttered these or suchlike sentences: "Poor 'man! and then he died."' How he patiently converts his poor home into a Lazaretto; endures, for long years, the contradiction of the miserable and unreasonable; with him unconnected, save that they had no other to yield them refuge! Generous old man! Worldly possession he has little; yet of this he gives freely; from his own hard-earned shilling, the halfpence for the poor, that 'waited his coming out,' are not withheld: the poor 'waited the coming out' of one not quite so poor! A Sterne can write sentimentalities on Dead Asses: Johnson has a rough voice; but he finds the wretched Daughter of Vice fallen down in the streets; carries her home on his own shoulders, and like a good Samaritan gives help to the help-needing, worthy or unworthy. Ought not Charity, even in that sense, to cover a multitude of sins? No Penny-a-week Committee-Lady, no manager of Soup-Kitchens, dancer at Charity-Balls, was this rugged, stern-visaged man: but where, in all England, could there have been found another soul so full of Pity, a hand so heavenlike bounteous as his? The widow's mite, we know, was greater than all the other gifts.

Perhaps it is this divine feeling of Affection, throughout manifested, that principally attracts us towards Johnson. A true brother of men is he; and filial lover of the Earth; who, with little bright spots of Attachment, 'where lives and works 'some loved one,' has beautified 'this rough solitary Earth into 'a peopled garden.' Lichfield, with its mostly dull and limited inhabitants, is to the last one of the sunny islets for him: *Salve magna parens!* Or read those Letters on his Mother's death: what a genuine solemn grief and pity lies recorded there; a

looking back into the Past, unspeakably mournful, unspeakably tender. And yet calm, sublime; for he must now act, not look: his venerated Mother has been taken from him; but he must now write a *Rasselas* to defray her funeral! Again in this little incident, recorded in his Book of Devotion, are not the tones of sacred Sorrow and Greatness deeper than in many a blank-verse Tragedy;—as, indeed, 'the fifth act of a Tragedy,' though unrhymed, does 'lie in every death-bed, were it a peasant's, and of straw:'

'Sunday, October 18, 1767. Yesterday, at about ten in the morning, I took my leave forever of my dear old friend, Catherine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old.

'I desired all to withdraw; then told her that we were to part forever; that as Christians, we should part with prayer; and that I would, if she was willing, say a short prayer beside her. She expressed great desire to hear me; and held up her poor hands as she lay in bed, with great fervour, while I prayed kneeling by her. * * *

'I then kissed her. She told me that to part was the greatest pain she had ever felt, and that she hoped we should meet again in a better place. I expressed, with swelled eyes and great emotion of tenderness, the same hopes. We kissed and parted; I humbly hope, to meet again, and to part no more.'

Tears trickling down the granite rock: a soft well of Pity springs within!—Still more tragical is this other scene: 'Johnson mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of 'having been an undutiful son. "Once, indeed," said he, "I 'was disobedient: I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter 'market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone 'for this fault."'—But by what method?—What method was now possible? Hear it; the words are again given as his own, though here evidently by a less capable reporter:

'Madam, I beg your pardon for the abruptness of my departure in the morning, but I was compelled to it by conscience. Fifty years ago, Madam, on this day, I committed a breach of filial piety. My father had been in the habit of attending Uttoxeter market, and opening a stall there for the sale of his Books. Confined by indisposition, he desired me, that day, to go and attend the stall in his place. My pride prevented me; I gave my father a refusal.—And now today I have

been at Uttoxeter; I went into the market at the time of business, uncovered my head, and stood with it bare, for an hour, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory.'

Who does not figure to himself this spectacle, amid the 'rainy weather, and the sneers,' or wonder, 'of the bystanders'? The memory of old Michael Johnson, rising from the far distance; sad-beckoning in the 'moonlight of memory:' how he had toiled faithfully hither and thither; patiently among the lowest of the low; been buffeted and beaten down, yet ever risen again, ever tried it anew—And oh, when the wearied old man, as Bookseller, or Hawker, or Tinker, or whatsoever it was that Fate had reduced him to, begged help of *thee* for one day,—how savage, diabolic, was that mean Vanity, which answered, No! He sleeps now; after life's fitful fever, he sleeps well: but thou, O Merciless, how now wilt thou still the sting of that remembrance?—The picture of Samuel Johnson standing bareheaded in the market there, is one of the grandest and saddest we can paint. Repentance! Repentance! he proclaims, as with passionate sobs: but only to the ear of Heaven, if Heaven will give him audience: the earthly ear and heart, that should have heard it, are now closed, unresponsive forever.

That this so keen-loving, soft-trembling Affectionateness, the inmost essence of his being, must have looked forth, in one form or another, through Johnson's whole character, practical and intellectual, modifying both, is not to be doubted. Yet through what singular distortions and superstitions, moping melancholies, blind habits, whims about 'entering with the right foot,' and 'touching every post as he walked along;' and all the other mad chaotic lumber of a brain that, with sun-clear intellect, hovered forever on the verge of insanity,—must that same inmost essence have looked forth; unrecognisable to all but the most observant! Accordingly it was not recognised; Johnson passed not for a fine nature, but for a dull, almost brutal one. Might not, for example, the first-fruit of such a Lovingness, coupled with his quick Insight, have been expected to be a peculiarly courteous demeanour as man among men? In Johnson's 'Politeness,' which he often, to the wonder of some, asserted to be great, there was indeed somewhat

that needed explanation. Nevertheless, if he insisted always on handing lady-visitors to their carriage; though with the certainty of collecting a mob of gazers in Fleet Street,—as might well be, the beau having on, by way of court-dress, 'his rusty 'brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes for slippers, a little 'shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves 'of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose:'—in all this we can see the spirit of true Politeness, only shining through a strange medium. Thus again, in his apartments, at one time, there were unfortunately no chairs. 'A gentleman 'who frequently visited him whilst writing his *Idlers*, constantly 'found him at his desk, sitting on one with three legs; and on 'rising from it, he remarked that Johnson never forgot its defect; 'but would either hold it in his hand, or place it with great com-'posure against some support; taking no notice of its imperfec-'tion to his visitor,'—who meanwhile, we suppose, sat upon folios, or in the sartorial fashion. 'It was remarkable in Johnson,' continues Miss Reynolds (*Renny dear*), 'that no external circum-'stances ever prompted him to make any apology, or to seem 'even sensible of their existence. Whether this was the effect of 'philosophic pride, or of some partial notion of his respecting 'high-breeding, is doubtful.' That it *was*, for one thing, the effect of genuine Politeness, is nowise doubtful. Not of the Pharisaical Brummellean Politeness, which would suffer crucifixion rather than ask twice for soup: but the noble universal Politeness of a man that knows the dignity of men, and feels his own; such as may be seen in the patriarchal bearing of an Indian Sachem; such as Johnson himself exhibited, when a sudden chance brought him into dialogue with his King. To us, with our view of the man, it nowise appears 'strange' that he should have boasted himself cunning in the laws of Politeness; nor 'stranger still,' habitually attentive to practise them.

More legibly is this influence of the Loving heart to be traced in his intellectual character. What, indeed, is the beginning of intellect, the first inducement to the exercise thereof, but attraction towards somewhat, *affection* for it? Thus too, who ever saw, or will see, any true talent, not to speak of genius, the foundation of which is not goodness, love? From Johnson's strength of Affection, we deduce many of his intellectual peculiarities; especially that threatening array of per-

versions, known under the name of 'Johnson's Prejudices.' Looking well into the root from which these sprang, we have long ceased to view them with hostility, can pardon and reverently pity them. Consider with what force early-imbibed opinions must have clung to a soul of this Affection. Those evil-famed Prejudices of his, that Jacobitism, Church-of-Englandism, hatred of the Scotch, belief in Witches, and suchlike, what were they but the ordinary beliefs of well-doing, well-meaning provincial Englishmen in that day? First gathered by his Father's hearth; round the kind 'country fires' of native Staffordshire; they grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength: they were hallowed by fondest sacred recollections; to part with them was parting with his heart's blood. If the man who has no strength of Affection, strength of Belief, have no strength of Prejudice, let him thank Heaven for it, but to himself take small thanks.

Melancholy it was, indeed, that the noble Johnson could not work himself loose from these adhesions; that he could only purify them, and wear them with some nobleness. Yet let us understand how they grew out from the very centre of his being: nay moreover, how they came to cohere in him with what formed the business and worth of his Life, the sum of his whole Spiritual Endeavour. For it is on the same ground that he became throughout an Edifier and Repairer, not, as the others of his make were, a Puller-down; that in an age of universal Scepticism, England was still to produce its Believer. Mark too his candour even here; while a Dr. Adams, with placid surprise, asks, "Have we not evidence enough of the soul's immortality?" Johnson answers, "I wish for more."

But the truth is, in Prejudice, as in all things, Johnson was the product of England; one of those *good* yeomen whose limbs were made in England: alas, the last of *such* Invincibles, their day being now done! His culture is wholly English; that not of a Thinker but of a 'Scholar:' his interests are wholly English; he sees and knows nothing but England; he is the John Bull of Spiritual Europe: let him live, love him, as he was and could not but be! Pitiable it is, no doubt, that a Samuel Johnson must confute Hume's irreligious Philosophy by some 'story from a Clergyman of the Bishoprick of Durham;' should see nothing in the great Frederick but 'Voltaire's lackey;' in Vol-

taire himself but a man *acerrimi ingenii, paucarum literarum;* in Rousseau but one worthy to be hanged; and in the universal, long-prepared, inevitable Tendency of European Thought but a green-sick milkmaid's crotchet of, for variety's sake, 'milking the Bull.' Our good, dear John! Observe too what it is that he sees in the city of Paris: no feeblest glimpse of those D'Alemberts and Diderots, or of the strange questionable work they did; solely some Benedictine Priests, to talk kitchen-latin with them about *Editiones Principes.* "*Monsheer Nongtongpaw!*" —Our dear, foolish John: yet is there a lion's heart within him!—Pitiable all these things were, we say; yet nowise inexcusable; nay, as basis or as foil to much else that was in Johnson, almost venerable. Ought we not, indeed, to honour England, and English Institutions and Way of Life, that they could still equip such a man; could furnish him in heart and head to be a Samuel Johnson, and yet to love them, and unyieldingly fight for them? What truth and living vigour must such Institutions once have had, when, in the middle of the Eighteenth Century, there was still enough left in them for this!

It is worthy of note that, in our little British Isle, the two grand Antagonisms of Europe should have stood embodied, under their very highest concentration, in two men produced simultaneously among ourselves. Samuel Johnson and David Hume, as was observed, were children nearly of the same year: through life they were spectators of the same Life-movement; often inhabitants of the same city. Greater contrast, in all things, between two great men, could not be. Hume, well-born, competently provided for, whole in body and mind, of his own determination forces a way into Literature: Johnson, poor, moonstruck, diseased, forlorn, is forced into it 'with the bayonet of necessity at his back.' And what a part did they severally play there! As Johnson became the father of all succeeding Tories; so was Hume the father of all succeeding Whigs, for his own Jacobitism was but an accident, as worthy to be named Prejudice as any of Johnson's. Again, if Johnson's culture was exclusively English; Hume's, in Scotland, became European;—for which reason too we find his influence spread deeply over all quarters of Europe, traceable deeply in all speculation, French, German, as well as domestic; while Johnson's name, out of England, is hardly anywhere to be met with. In spi-

ritual stature they are almost equal; both great, among the greatest: yet how unlike in likeness! Hume has the widest, methodising, comprehensive eye; Johnson the keenest for perspicacity and minute detail: so had, perhaps chiefly, their education ordered it. Neither of the two rose into Poetry; yet both to some approximation thereof: Hume to something of an Epic clearness and method, as in his delineation of the Commonwealth Wars; Johnson to many a deep Lyric tone of plaintiveness and impetuous graceful power, scattered over his fugitive compositions. Both, rather to the general surprise, had a certain rugged Humour shining through their earnestness: the indication, indeed, that they *were* earnest men, and had *subdued* their wild world into a kind of temporary home and safe dwelling. Both were, by principle and habit, Stoics: yet Johnson with the greater merit, for he alone had very much to triumph over; farther, he alone ennobled his Stoicism into Devotion. To Johnson Life was as a Prison, to be endured with heroic faith: to Hume it was little more than a foolish Bartholomew-Fair Show-booth, with the foolish crowdings and elbowings of which it was not worth while to quarrel; the whole would break up, and be at liberty, so *soon*. Both realised the highest task of Manhood, that of living like men; each died not unfitly, in his way: Hume as one, with factitious, half-false gaiety, taking leave of what was itself wholly but a Lie: Johnson as one, with awe-struck, yet resolute and piously expectant heart, taking leave of a Reality, to enter a Reality still higher. Johnson had the harder problem of it, from first to last: whether, with some hesitation, we can admit that he was intrinsically the better-gifted, may remain undecided.

These two men now rest; the one in Westminster Abbey here; the other in the Calton-Hill Churchyard of Edinburgh. Through Life they did not meet: as contrasts, 'like in unlike,' love each other; so might they two have loved, and communed kindly,—had not the terrestrial dross and darkness that was in them withstood! One day, their spirits, what Truth was in each, will be found working, living in harmony and free union, even here below. They were the two half-men of their time: whoso should combine the intrepid Candour and decisive scientific Clearness of Hume, with the Reverence, the Love and devout Humility of Johnson, were the whole man of a new time.

Till such whole man arrive for us, and the distracted time admit of such, might the Heavens but bless poor England with half-men worthy to tie the shoe-latchets of these, resembling these even from afar! Be both attentively regarded, let the true Effort of both prosper;—and for the present, both take our affectionate farewell!

GOETHE'S WORKS.[1]

[1832.]

It is now four years since we specially invited attention to this Book; first in an essay on the graceful little fantasy-piece of *Helena*, then in a more general one on the merits and workings of Goethe himself: since which time two important things have happened in reference to it; for the publication, advancing with successful regularity, reached its fortieth and last volume in 1830; and now, still more emphatically to conclude both this 'completed, final edition,' and all other editions, endeavours and attainments of one in whose hands lay so much, come tidings that the venerable man has been recalled from our earth, and of his long labours and high faithful stewardship we have had what was appointed us.

The greatest epoch in a man's life is not always his death; yet for bystanders, such as contemporaries, it is always the most noticeable. All other epochs are transition-points from one visible condition to another visible; the days of their occurrence are like any other days, from which only the clearer-sighted will distinguish them; bridges they are, over which the smooth highway runs continuous, as if no Rubicon were there. But the day in a mortal's destinies which is like no other is his death-day: here, too, is a transition, what we may call a bridge, as at other epochs; but now from the keystone onwards half the arch rests on invisibility; this is a transition out of visible Time into invisible Eternity.

Since Death, as the palpable revelation (not to be overlooked by the dullest) of the mystery of wonder and depth and

[1] Foreign Quarterly Review, No. 19. — *Goethes Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand* (Goethe's Works. Completed, final Edition), 40 voll. Stuttgard and Tübingen, 1827-30.

fear, which everywhere from beginning to ending through its whole course and movement lies under Life, is in any case so great,—we find it not unnatural that hereby a new look of greatness, a new interest should be impressed on whatsoever has preceded it and led to it; that even towards some man, whose history did not then first become significant, the world should turn, at his departure, with a quite peculiar earnestness, and now seriously ask itself a question, perhaps never seriously asked before, What the purport and character of his presence here was; now when he has gone hence, and is not present here, and will remain absent forevermore. It is the conclusion that crowns the work; much more the irreversible conclusion wherein all is concluded: thus is there no life so mean but a death will make it memorable.

At all lykewakes, accordingly, the doings and endurances of the Departed are the theme: rude souls, rude tongues grow eloquently busy with him; a whole septuagint of beldames are striving to render, in such dialect as they have, the small bible, or apocrypha, of his existence, for the general perusal. The least famous of mankind will for once become public, and have his name printed, and read not without interest: in the Newspaper Obituaries; on some frail memorial, under which he has crept to sleep. Foolish love-sick girls know that there is one method to impress the obdurate false Lovelace, and wring his bosom; the method of drowning: foolish ruined dandies, whom the tailor will no longer trust, and the world turning on its heel is about forgetting, can recall it to attention by report of pistol; and so, in a worthless death, if in a worthless life no more, reattain the topgallant of renown,—for one day. Death is ever a sublimity and supernatural wonder, were there no other left: the last act of a most strange drama, which is not dramatic, but has now become real; wherein, miraculously, Furies, god-missioned, have in actual person risen from the abyss, and do verily dance there in that terror of all terrors, and wave their dusky-glaring torches, and shake their serpent-hair! Out of which heart-thrilling, so authentically tragic fifth-act there goes, as we said, a new meaning over all the other four; making them likewise tragic and authentic, and memorable in some measure, were they formerly the sorriest pickle-herring farce.

But above all, when a Great Man dies, then has the time come for putting us in mind that he was alive; biographies and biographic sketches, criticisms, characters, anecdotes, reminiscences, issue forth as from opened springing fountains; the world, with a passion whetted by impossibility, will yet a while retain, yet a while speak with, though only to the unanswering echoes, what it has lost without remedy: thus is the last event of life often the loudest; and real spiritual *Apparitions* (who have been named Men), as false imaginary ones are fabled to do, vanish in thunder.

For ourselves, as regards the great Goethe, if not seeking to be foremost in this natural movement, neither do we shun to mingle in it. The life and ways of such men as he, are, in all seasons, a matter profitable to contemplate, to speak of: if in this death-season, long with a sad reverence looked forward to, there has little increase of light, little change of feeling arisen for the writer, a readier attention, nay a certain expectancy, from some readers is call sufficient. Innumerable meditations and disquisitions on this subject must yet pass through the minds of men; on all sides must it be taken up, by various observers, by successive generations, and ever a new light may evolve itself: why should not this observer, on this side, set down what he partially has seen into; and the necessary process thereby be forwarded, at any rate continued?

A continental Humorist, of deep-piercing, resolute though strangely perverse faculty, whose works are as yet but sparingly if at all cited in English literature, has written a chapter, somewhat in the nondescript manner of metaphysico-rhetorical, homiletic-exegetic rhapsody, on the *Greatness of Great Men;* which topic we agree with him in reckoning one of the most pregnant. The time, indeed, is come when much that was once found visibly subsistent Without must anew be sought for Within; many a human feeling, indestructible and to man's well-being indispensable, which once manifested itself in expressive forms to the Sense, now lies hidden in the *formless* depths of the Spirit, or at best struggles out obscurely in forms become superannuated, altogether inexpressive and unrecognisable; from which paralysed imprisoned state, often the best effort of the thinker is required, and moreover were well applied, to deliver it. For if the Present is to be the 'living

sum-total of the whole Past,' nothing that ever lived in the Past must be let wholly die; whatsoever was done, whatsoever was said or written aforetime was done and written for our edification. In such state of imprisonment, paralysis and unrecognisable defacement, as compared with its condition in the old ages, lies this our feeling towards great men; wherein, and in the much else that belongs to it, some of the deepest human interests will be found involved. A few words from Herr Professor Teufelsdröckh, if they help to set this preliminary matter in a clearer light, may be worth translating here. Let us first remark with him, however, 'how wonderful in all cases, great or little, is the importance of man to man:'

'Deny it as he will,' says Teufelsdröckh, 'man reverently 'loves man, and daily by action evidences his belief in the 'divineness of man. What a more than regal mystery en-'circles the poorest of living souls for us! The highest is not 'independent of him; his suffrage has value: could the highest 'monarch convince himself that the humblest beggar with sin-'cere mind despised him, no serried ranks of halberdiers and 'bodyguards could shut out some little twinge of pain; some 'emanation from the low had pierced into the bosom of the 'high. Of a truth, men are mystically united; a mystic bond 'of brotherhood makes all men one.

'Thus too has that fierce false hunting after Popularity, 'which you often wonder at, and laugh at, a basis on some-'thing true: nay, under the other aspect, what is that won-'derful spirit of Interference, were it but manifested as the 'paltriest scandal and tea-table backbiting, other than in-'versely or directly, a heartfelt indestructible sympathy of 'man with man? Hatred itself is but an inverse love. The 'philosopher's wife complained to the philosopher that certain 'two-legged animals without feathers spake evil of him, spite-'fully criticised his goings out and comings in; wherein she 'too failed not of her share: "Light of my life," answered the 'philosopher, "it is their love of us, unknown to themselves, 'and taking a foolish shape; thank them for it, and do thou 'love them more wisely. Were we mere steam-engines work-'ing here under this rooftree, they would scorn to speak of us 'once in a twelvemonth." The last stage of human perver-'sion, it has been said, is when sympathy corrupts itself into

'envy; and the indestructible interest we take in men's doings 'has become a joy over their faults and misfortunes: this is 'the last and lowest stage; lower than this we cannot go: the 'absolute petrifaction of indifference is not attainable on this 'side total death.

'And now,' continues the Professor, 'rising from these 'lowest tea-table regions of human communion into the higher 'and highest, is there not still in the world's demeanour to-'wards Great Men, enough to make the old practice of *Hero-'worship* intelligible, nay significant? Simpleton! I tell thee 'Hero-worship still continues; it is the only creed which never 'and nowhere grows or can grow obsolete. For always and 'everywhere this remains a true saying: *Il y a dans le cœur 'humain un fibre religieux.* Man always *worships* something; 'always he sees the Infinite shadowed forth in something finite; 'and indeed can and must so see it in *any* finite thing, once 'tempt him well to *fix* his eyes thereon. Yes, in practice, be 'it in theory or not, we are all Supernaturalists; and have an 'infinite happiness or an infinite woe not only waiting us here-'after, but looking out on us through any pitifulest present 'good or evil;—as, for example, on a high poetic Byron 'through his lameness; as on all young souls through their 'first lovesuit; as on older souls, still more foolishly, through 'many a lawsuit, paper-battle, political horse-race or ass-race. 'Atheism, it has been said, is impossible; and truly, if we will 'consider it, no Atheist denies a Divinity, but only some NAME '(*Nomen, Numen*) of a Divinity: the God is still present there, 'working in that benighted heart, were it only as a god of 'darkness. Thousands of stern Sansculottes, to seek no other 'instance, go chanting martyr-hymns to their guillotine: these 'spurn at the name of a God; yet worship one (as hapless '"Proselytes without the Gate") under the new pseudonym of 'Freedom. What indeed is all this that is called political 'fanaticism, revolutionary madness, force of hatred, force of 'love and so forth, but merely, under new designations, that 'same wondrous, wonder-working reflex from the Infinite, 'which in all times has given the Finite its empyrean or tar-'tarean hue, thereby its blessedness or cursedness, its market-'able worth or unworth?

'Remark, however, as illustrative of several things, and

'more to the purpose here, that man does in strict speech 'always remain the clearest symbol of the Divinity to man. 'Friend Novalis, the devoutest heart I knew, and of purest 'depth, has not scrupled to call man, what the Divine Man 'is called in Scripture, a "Revelation in the Flesh." "There 'is but one temple in the world," says he, "and that is the 'body of man. Bending before men is a reverence done to 'this revelation in the flesh. We touch heaven when we lay 'our hand on a human body." In which notable words a 'reader that meditates them may find such meaning and scien-'tific accuracy as will surprise him.

'The ages of superstition, it appears to be sufficiently 'known, are behind us. To no man, were he never so heroic, 'are shrines any more built, and vows offered as to one hav-'ing supernatural power. The sphere of the TRANSCENDENTAL 'cannot now, by that avenue of heroic worth, of eloquent wis-'dom, or by any other avenue, be so easily reached. The 'worth that in these days could *transcend* all estimate or sur-'vey, and lead men willingly captive into *infinite* admiration, 'into worship, is still waited for (with little hope) from the 'unseen Time. All that can be said to offer itself in that 'kind, at present, is some slight household devotion (*Haus-'Andacht*), whereby this or the other enthusiast, privately in 'all quietness, can love his hero or sage without measure, and 'idealise, and so, in a sense, idolise him;—which practice, as 'man is by necessity an idol-worshipper (no offence in him *so* 'long as *idol* means accurately *vision*, clear *symbol*), and all 'wicked idolatry is but a *more* idolatrous worship, may be 'excusable, in certain cases praiseworthy. Be this as it will, 'let the curious eye gratify itself in observing how the old 'antediluvian feeling still, though now struggling out so im-'perfectly, and forced into unexpected shapes, asserts its exist-'ence in the newest man: and the Chaldeans or old Persians, 'with their Zerdusht, differ only in vesture and dialect from 'the French, with their Voltaire *étouffé sous des roses*.'[2]

This, doubtless, is a wonderful phraseology, but referable, as the Professor urges, to that capacious reservoir and convenience, 'the nature of the time:' 'A time,' says he, 'when,

[2] *Die Kleider: ihr Werden und Wirken.* Von D. TEUFELSDRÖCKH. Weissnichtwo, Stillschweign'sche Buchhandlung, 1830.

'as in some Destruction of a Roman Empire, wrecks of old 'things are everywhere confusedly jumbled with rudiments of 'new; so that, till once the mixture and amalgamation be 'complete, and even have long continued complete and uni- 'versally apparent, no grammatical *langue d'oc* or *langue d'oui* 'can establish itself, but only some barbarous mixed *lingua* '*rustica*, more like a jargon than a language, must prevail; 'and thus the deepest matters be either barbarously spoken 'of, or wholly omitted and lost sight of, which were still worse.' But to let the Homily proceed:

'Consider, at any rate,' continues he elsewhere, 'under 'how many categories, down to the most impertinent, the 'world inquires concerning Great Men, and never wearies 'striving to represent to itself their whole structure, aspect, 'procedure, outward and inward! Blame not the world for such 'minutest curiosity about its great ones: this comes of the 'world's old-established necessity to worship: and, indeed, 'whom but its great ones, that "like celestial fire-pillars go be- 'fore it on the march," ought it to worship? Blame not even 'that mistaken worship of sham great ones, that are not celes- 'tial fire-pillars, but terrestrial glass-lanterns with wick and 'tallow, under no guidance but a stupid fatuous one; of which 'worship the litanies and gossip-homilies are, in some quarters 'of the globe, so inexpressibly uninteresting. Blame it not; 'pity it rather, with a certain loving respect.

'Man is never, let me assure thee, altogether a clothes- 'horse: under the clothes there is always a body and a soul. 'The Count von Bügeleisen, so idolised by our fashionable 'classes, is not, as the English Swift asserts, created wholly by 'the Tailor; but partially also by the supernatural Powers. 'His beautifully-cut apparel, and graceful expensive tackle and 'environment of all kinds, are but the symbols of a beauty and 'gracefulness, supposed to be inherent in the Count himself; 'under which predicament come also our reverence for his 'counthood, and in good part that other notable phenomenon 'of his being worshipped because he *is* worshipped, of one 'idolater, sheep-like, running after him, because many have 'already run. Nay, on what other principle but this latter 'hast thou, O reader (if thou be not one of a thousand), read, 'for example, thy *Homer*, and found some real joy therein?

'All these things, I say, the apparel, the counthood, the existing popularity and whatever else can combine there, are symbols;—bank-notes, which, whether there be gold behind them, or only bankruptcy and empty drawers, pass current for gold. But how, now, could they so pass, if gold itself were not prized, and believed and known to be somewhere extant? Produce the actual gold visibly, and mark how, in these distrustful days, your most accredited bank-paper stagnates in the market! No Holy Alliance, though plush and gilding and genealogical parchment, to the utmost that the time yields, be hung round it, can gain for itself a dominion in the heart of any man; some thirty or forty millions of men's hearts being, on the other hand, subdued into loyal reverence by a Corsican Lieutenant of Artillery. Such is the difference between God-creation and Tailor-creation. Great is the Tailor, but not the greatest. So, too, in matters spiritual, what avails it that a man be Doctor of the Sorbonne, Doctor of Laws, of Both Laws; and can cover half a square foot in pica-type with the list of his fellowships, arranged as equilateral triangle, at the vertex an "&c." over and above, and with the parchment of his diplomas could thatch the whole street he lives in: what avails it? The man is but an owl; of prepossessing gravity, indeed; much respected by simple neighbours; but to whose sorrowful hootings no creature hastens, eager to listen. While, again, let but some riding gauger arrive under cloud of night at a Scottish inn, and word be whispered that it is Robert Burns; in few instants all beds and trucklebeds, from garret to cellar, are left vacant, and gentle and simple, with open eyes and erect ears, are gathered together.'

Whereby, at least, from amid this questionable *linguæ*, 'more like a jargon than a language,' so much may have become apparent: What unspeakable importance the world attaches, has ever attached (expressing the same by all possible methods) and will ever attach, to its great men. Deep and venerable, whether looked at in the Teufelsdröckh manner or otherwise, is this love of men for great men, this their exclusive admiration of great men; a quality of vast significance, if we consider it well; for, as in its origin it reaches up into the highest and even holiest provinces of man's nature, so in his practical history it will be found to play the most surprising part. Does

not, for one example, the fact of such a temper indestructibly existing in all men, point out man as an essentially governable and teachable creature, and forever refute that calumny of his being by nature insubordinate, prone to rebellion? Men seldom, or rather never for a length of time and deliberately, rebel against anything that does not deserve rebelling against. Ready, ever zealous is the obedience and devotedness they show to the great, to the really high; prostrating their whole possession and self, body, heart, soul and spirit, under the feet of whatsoever is authentically above them. Nay, in most times, it is rather a slavish devotedness to those who only seem and pretend to be above them that constitutes their fault.

But why seek special instances? Is not Love, from of old, known to be the beginning of all things? And what is admiration of the great but love of the truly lovable? The first product of love is *imitation*, that all-important peculiar gift of man, whereby Mankind is not only held socially together in the present time, but connected in like union with the past and the future; so that the attainment of the innumerable Departed can be conveyed down to the Living, and transmitted with increase to the Unborn. Now great men, in particular spiritually great men (for all men have a spirit to guide, though all have not kingdoms to govern and battles to fight), are the men universally imitated and learned of, the glass in which whole generations survey and shape themselves.

Thus is the Great Man of an age, beyond comparison, the most important phenomenon therein; all other phenomena, were they Waterloo Victories, Constitutions of the Year One, glorious revolutions, new births of the golden age in what sort you will, are small and trivial. Alas, all these pass away, and are left extinct behind, like the tar-barrels they were celebrated with; and the new-born golden age proves always to be still-born: neither is there, was there or will there be any other golden age possible, save only in this: in new increase of worth and wisdom;—that is to say, therefore, in the new arrival among us of wise and worthy men. Such arrivals are the great occurrences, though unnoticed ones; all else that can occur, in what kind soever, is but the *road*, up-hill or down-hill, rougher or smoother; nowise the *power* that will nerve us for travelling forward thereon. So little comparatively can fore-

thought or the cunningest mechanical precontrivance do for a nation, for a world! Ever must we wait on the bounty of Time, and see what leader shall be born for us, and whither he will lead.

Thus too, in defect of great men, noted men become important: the Noted Man of an age is the emblem and living summary of the Ideal which that age has fashioned for itself: show me the noted man of an age, you show me the age that produced him. Such figures walk in the van, for great good or for great evil; if not leading, then driven and still farther misleading. The apotheosis of Beau Brummel has marred many a pretty youth; landed him not at any *goal* where oak garlands, earned by faithful labour and valour, carry men to the immortal gods; but, by a fatal inversion, at the King's Bench *gaol*, where he that has never sowed shall not any longer reap, still less any longer burn his barn, but scrape himself with potsherds among the ashes thereof, and consider with all deliberation 'what he wanted, and what he wants.'

To enlighten this principle of reverence for the great, to teach us reverence, and whom we are to revere and admire, should ever be a chief aim of Education (indeed it is herein that instruction properly both begins and ends); and in these late ages, perhaps more than ever, so indispensable is now our need of clear reverence, so inexpressibly poor our supply. 'Clear reverence!' it was once responded to a seeker of light: 'all want it, perhaps thou thyself.' What wretched idols, of Leeds cloth, stuffed out with bran of one kind or other, do men either worship, or being tired of worshipping (so expensively without fruit), rend in pieces and kick out of doors, amid loud shouting and crowing, what they call 'tremendous cheers,' as if the feat were miraculous! In private life, as in public, delusion in this sort does its work; the blind leading the blind, both fall into the ditch.

'For, alas,' cries Teufelsdröckh on this occasion, 'though 'in susceptive hearts it is felt that a great man is unspeakably 'great, the specific marks of him are mournfully mistaken: 'thus must innumerable pilgrims journey, in toil and hope, to 'shrines where there is no healing. On the fairer half of the 'creation, above all, such error presses hard. Women are 'born worshippers; in their good little hearts lies the most

'craving relish for greatness: it is even said, each chooses 'her husband on the hypothesis of his being a great man—in 'his way. The good creatures, yet the foolish! For their 'choices, no insight, or next to none, being vouchsafed them, 'are unutterable. Yet how touching also to see, for example, 'Parisian ladies of quality, all rustling in silks and laces, visit 'the condemned-cell of a fierce Cartouche; and in silver ac-'cents, and with the looks of angels, beg locks of hair from 'him; as from the greatest, were it only in the profession of 'highwayman! Still more fatal is that other mistake, the com-'monest of all, whereby the devotional youth, seeking for a 'great man to worship, finds such within his own worthy per-'son, and proceeds with all zeal to worship *there*. Unhappy 'enough: to realise, in an age of such gas-light illumination, 'this basest superstition of the ages of Egyptian darkness!

'Remark, however, not without emotion, that of all rituals 'and divine services and ordinances ever instituted for the 'worship of any god, this of Self-worship is the ritual most 'faithfully observed. Trouble enough has the Hindoo devotee, 'with his washings and cookings and perplexed formularies, 'tying him up at every function of his existence: but is it 'greater trouble than that of his German self-worshipping bro-'ther; is it trouble even by the devoutest Fakir, so honestly 'undertaken and fulfilled? I answer, No; for the German's 'heart is in it. The German worshipper, for whom does he 'work, and scheme, and struggle, and fight, at his rising up 'and lying down, in all times and places, but for his god only? 'Can he escape from that divine presence of Self; can his 'heart waver, or his hand wax faint in that sacred service? 'The Hebrew Jonah, prophet as he was, rather than take a 'message to Nineveh, took ship to Tarshish, hoping to hide 'there from his Sender; but in what ship-hull or whale's belly 'shall the madder German Jonah cherish hope of hiding from '—Himself! Consider, too, the temples he builds, and the ser-'vices of (shoulder-knotted) priests he ordains and maintains; 'the smoking sacrifices, thrice a day or oftener, with perhaps 'a psalmist or two of broken-winded laureats and literators, 'if such are to be had. Nor are his votive gifts wanting, of 'rings and jewels and gold embroideries, such as our Lady of 'Loretto might grow yellower to look upon. A toilsome, per-

'petual worship, heroically gone through: and then with what 'issue? Alas, with the worst. The old Egyptian leek-wor- 'shipper had, it is to be hoped, seasons of light and faith: his 'leek-god seems to smile on him; he his humbled, and in 'humility exalted, before the majesty of something, were it only 'that of germinative Physical Nature, seen through a germi- 'nating, not unnourishing potherb. The Self-worshipper, again, 'has no seasons of light, which are not of blue sulphur-light; 'hungry, envious pride, not humility in any sort, is the ashy 'fruit of his worship; his self-god growls on him with the per- 'petual wolf-cry, Give! Give! and your devout Byron, as the 'Frau Hunt, with a wise simplicity (*geistreich naiv*), once said, '"must sit sulking like a great schoolboy, in pet because they 'have given him a plain bun and not a spiced one."—His bun 'was a life-rent of God's universe, with the tasks it offered, and 'the tools to do them with; *à priori*, one might have fancied 'it could be put up with for once.'

After which wondrous glimpses into the Teufelsdröckh Homily on the *Greatness of Great Men*, it may now be high time to proceed with the matter more in hand; and remark that our own much-calumniated age, so fruitful in noted men, is also not without its great. In noted men, undoubtedly enough, we surpass all ages since the creation of the world; and from two plain causes: First, that there has been a French Revolution, and that there is now pretty rapidly proceeding a European Revolution; whereby everything, as in the Term-day of a great city, when all mortals are removing, has been, so to speak, set out into the street; and many a foolish vessel of dishonour, unnoticed and worth no notice in its own dark corner, has become universally recognisable when once mounted on the summit of some furniture-wagon, and tottering there (as Committee-president, or other head-director), with what is put under it, slowly onwards to its new lodging and arrangement, itself, alas, hardly to get thither without *breakage*. Secondly, that the Printing Press, with stitched and loose leaves, has now come into full action; and makes, as it were, a sort of universal daylight, for removal and revolution and everything else to proceed in, far more commodiously, yet also far more conspicuously. A complaint has accordingly been heard that famous men abound,

that we are quite overrun with famous men: however, the remedy lies in the disease itself; crowded succession already means quick oblivion. For wagon after wagon rolls off, and either arrives or is overset; and so, in either case, the vessel of dishonour, which, at worst, we saw only in crossing some street, will afflict us no more.

Of great men, among so many millions of noted men, it is computed that in our time there have been Two; one in the practical, another in the speculative province: Napoleon Buonaparte and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In which dual number, inconsiderable as it is, our time may perhaps specially pride itself, and take precedence of many others; in particular, reckon itself the flowertime of the whole last century and half. Every age will, no doubt, have its superior man or men; but one *so* superior as to take rank among the high of all ages, this is what we call a great man; this rarely makes his appearance, such bounty of Nature and Accident must combine to produce and unfold him. Of Napoleon and his works all ends of the world have heard: for *such* a host marched not in silence through the frighted deep: few heads there are in this Planet which have not formed to themselves some featured or featureless image of him; his history has been written about, on the great scale and on the small, some millions of times, and still remains to be written: one of our highest literary problems. For such a 'light-nimbus' of glory and renown encircled the man; the environment he walked in was itself so stupendous, that the eye grew dazzled, and mistook his proportions; or quite turned away from him in pain and temporary blindness. Thus even among the clear-sighted there is no unanimity about Napoleon; and only here and there does his own greatness begin to be interpreted, and accurately separated from the mere greatness of his fame and fortune.

Goethe, again, though of longer continuance in the world, and intrinsically of much more unquestionable greatness and even importance there, could not be so noted by the world: for if the explosion of powder-mines and artillery-parks naturally attracts every eye and ear; the approach of a new-created star (dawning on us, in new-created radiance, from the eternal Deeps!), though *this*, and not the artillery-parks, is to shape our destiny and *rule* the lower earth, is notable at first only to

certain stargazers and weather-prophets. Among ourselves especially, Goethe had little recognition: indeed, it was only of late that his existence, as a man and not as a mere sound, became authentically known to us; and some shadow of his high endowments and endeavours, and of the high meaning that might lie therein, arose in the general mind of England, even of intelligent England. Five years ago, to rank him with Napoleon, like him as rising unattainable beyond his class, like him and more than he of quite peculiar moment to all Europe, would have seemed a wonderful procedure; candour even, and enlightened liberality, to grant him place beside this and the other home-born ready-writer, blessed with that special privilege of 'English cultivation,' and able thereby to write novels, heart-captivating, heart-rending, or of enchaining interest.

Since which time, however, let us say, the progress of clearer apprehension has been rapid and satisfactory: innumerable unmusical voices have already fallen silent on this matter; for in fowls of every feather, even in the pertest choughs and thievish magpies, there dwells a singular reverence of the eagle; no Dulness is so courageous, but if you once show it any gleam of a heavenly Resplendence, it will, at lowest, shut its eyes and say nothing. So fares it here with the old-established British critic; who, indeed, in these days of ours, begins to be strangely situated; so many new things rising on his horizon, black indefinable shapes, magical or not; the old brickfield (where he kneaded insufficient marketable bricks) all stirring under his feet; preternatural, mad-making tones in the earth and air;—with all which what shall an old-established British critic and brickmaker do, but, at wisest, put his hands in his pockets, and, with the face and heart of a British mastiff, though amid dismal enough forebodings, see what it will turn to?

In the younger, more hopeful minds, again, in most minds that can be considered as in a state of growth, German literature is taking its due place: in such, and in generations of other such that are to follow them, some thankful appreciation of the greatest in German literature cannot fail; at all events this feeling that he *is* great and the greatest, whereby appreciation, and what alone is of much value, appropriation, first becomes rightly possible. To forward such on their way towards appropriating what excellence this man realised and created for them,

somewhat has already been done, yet not much; much still waits to be done. The field, indeed, is large: there are Forty Volumes of the most significant Writing that has been produced for the last two centuries; there is the whole long Life and heroic Character of him who produced them; all this to expatiate over and inquire into; in both which departments the deepest thinker, and most far-sighted, may find scope enough.

Nevertheless, in these days of the ten-pound franchise, when all the world (perceiving now, like the Irish innkeeper, that 'death and destruction are just coming in') will have itself represented in parliament; and the wits of so many are gone in this direction to gather wool, and must needs return more or less shorn; it were foolish to invite either young or old into great depths of thought on such a remote matter; the tendency of which is neither for the Reform Bill nor against it, but quietly *through* it and beyond it; nowise to prescribe this or that mode of *electing* members, but only to produce a few members *worth* electing. Not for many years (who knows how many!) in these harassed, hand-to-mouth circumstances, can the world's bleared eyes open themselves to study the true import of such topics; of this topic, the highest of such. As things actually stand, some quite cursory glances, and considerations close on the surface, to remind a few (unelected, unelective) parties interested, that it lies over for study, are all that can be attempted here: could we, by any method, in any measure, disclose for such the wondrous wonder-working *element* it hovers in, the *light* it is to be studied and inquired-after in, what is needfulest at present were accomplished.

One class of considerations, near enough the surface, we avoid; all that partakes of an elegiac character. True enough, nothing can be *done* or suffered, but there is something to be *said*, wisely or unwisely. The departure of our Greatest contemporary Man could not be other than a great event; fitted to awaken, in all who with understanding beheld it, feelings sad, but high and sacred, of mortality and immortality, of mourning and of triumph; far lookings into the Past and into the Future, —so many changes, fearful and wonderful, of fleeting Time; glimpses too of the Eternity these rest on, which knows no change. At the present date and distance, however, all this pertains not to us; has been uttered elsewhere, or may be left

for utterance there. Let us consider the Exequies as past; that the high Rogus, with its sweet-scented wood, amid the wail of music eloquent to speechless hearts, has flamed aloft, heaven-kissing, in sight of all the Greeks; and that now the ashes of the Hero are gathered into their urn, and the host has marched onwards to new victories and new toils; ever to be mindful of the dead, not to mourn for him any more. The host of the Greeks, in this case, was all thinking Europe: whether their funeral games were appropriate and worthy, we stop not to inquire; the time, in regard to such things, is empty or ill-provided, and this was what the time could conveniently do. All canonisation and solemn cremation are gone by; and as yet nothing suitable, nothing that does not border upon parody, has appeared in their room. A Bentham bequeaths his remains to be lectured over in a school of anatomy; and perhaps, even in this way, finds, as chief of the Utilitarians, a really nobler funeral than any other, which the prosaic age, rich only in crapes and hollow scutcheons (of timber as of words), could have afforded him.

The matter in hand being *Goethe's Works*, and the greatest work of every man, or rather the summary and net amount of all his works, being the Life he has led, we ask, as the first question: How it went with Goethe in that matter; what was the practical basis, of want and fulfilment, of joy and sorrow, from which his spiritual productions grew forth; the characters of which they must more or less legibly bear? In which sense, those Volumes entitled by him *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, wherein his personal history, what he has thought fit to make known of it, stands delineated, will long be valuable. A noble commentary, instructive in many ways, lies opened there, and yearly increasing in worth and interest; which all readers, now when the true quality of it is ascertained, will rejoice that circumstances induced and allowed him to write: for surely if old Cellini's counsel have any propriety, it is doubly proper in this case: the autobiographic practice he recommends (of which the last century in particular has seen so many worthy and worthless examples) was never so much in place as here. 'All 'men, of what rank soever,' thus counsels the brave Benvenuto, 'who have accomplished aught virtuous or virtuous-like, should,

'provided they be conscious of really good purposes, write 'down their own life: nevertheless, not put hand to so worthy 'an enterprise till after they have reached the age of forty.' All which ukase-regulations Goethe had abundantly fulfilled,—the last as abundantly as any, for he had now reached the age of sixty-two.

'This year, 1811,' says he, 'distinguishes itself for me by persevering outward activity. The *Life of Philip Hackert* went to press; the papers committed to me all carefully elaborated as the case required. By this task I was once more attracted to the South: the occurrences which, at that period, had befallen me there, in Hackert's company or neighbourhood, became alive in the imagination; I had cause to ask, Why this which I was doing for another should not be attempted for myself? I turned, accordingly, before completion of that volume, to my own earliest personal history; and, in truth, found here that I had delayed too long. The work should have been undertaken while my mother yet lived; thereby had I got nigher those scenes of childhood, and been, by her great strength of memory, transported into the midst of them. Now, however, must these vanished apparitions be recalled by my own help; and first, with labour, many an incitement to recollection, like a necessary magic apparatus, be devised. To represent the development of a child who had grown to be remarkable, how this exhibited itself under given circumstances, and yet how in general it could content the student of human nature and his views: such was the thing I had to do.

'In this sense, unpretendingly enough, to a work treated with anxious fidelity, I gave the name *Wahrheit und Dichtung* (Truth and Fiction); deeply convinced that man in immediate Presence, still more in Remembrance, fashions and models the external world according to his own peculiarities.

'The business, as, with historical studying, and otherwise recalling of places and persons, I had much time to spend on it, busied me wheresoever I went or stood, at home and abroad, to such a degree that my actual condition became like a secondary matter; though again, on all hands, when summoned outwards by occasion, I with full force and undivided sense proved myself present.'[3]

These Volumes, with what other supplementary matter has been added to them (the rather as Goethe's was a life of manifold relation, of the widest connexion with important or elevated persons, not to be carelessly laid before the world, and he had the rare good fortune of arranging all things that regarded even his posthumous concernment with the existing generation, ac-

[3] *Werke*, xxxii. 62.

cording to his own deliberate judgment), are perhaps likely to be, for a long time, our only authentic reference. By the last will of the deceased, it would seem, all his papers and effects are to lie exactly as they are, till after another twenty years.

Looking now into these magically-recalled scenes of childhood and manhood, the student of human nature will under all manner of shapes, from first to last, note one thing: The singularly complex Possibility offered from without, yet along with it the deep never-failing Force from within, whereby all this is conquered and realised. It was as if accident and primary endowment had conspired to produce a character on the great scale; a will is cast abroad into the widest, wildest element, and gifted also in an extreme degree to prevail over this, to fashion this to its own form: in which subordinating and self-fashioning of its circumstances a character properly consists. In external situations, it is true, in occurrences such as could be recited in the Newspapers, Goethe's existence is not more complex than other men's; outwardly rather a pacific smooth existence: but in his inward specialties and depth of faculty and temper, in his position spiritual and temporal towards the world as it was, and the world as he could have wished it, the observant eye may discern complexity, perplexity enough; an extent of data greater, perhaps, than had lain in any life-problem for some centuries. And now, as mentioned, the force for solving this was, in like manner, granted him in extraordinary measure; so that we must say, his possibilities were faithfully and with wonderful success turned into acquisitions; and this man fought the good fight, not only victorious, as all true men are, but victorious without damage, and with an ever-increasing strength for new victory, as only great and happy men are. Not wounds and loss (beyond fast-healing skin-deep wounds) has the unconquerable to suffer; only ever-enduring toil; weariness,—from which, after rest, he will rise stronger than before.

Good fortune, what the world calls good fortune, awaits him from beginning to end; but also a far deeper felicity than this. Such worldly gifts of good fortune are what we call possibilities: happy he that can rule over them; but *doubly* unhappy he that cannot. Only in virtue of good guidance does that same good fortune prove good. Wealth, health, fiery light with Proteus

many-sidedness of mind, peace, honour, length of days: with all this you may make no Goethe, but only some Voltaire; with the most that was fortuitous in all this, make only some short-lived, unhappy, unprofitable Byron.

At no period of the World's History can a gifted man be born when he will not find enough to do; in no circumstances come into life but there will be contradictions for him to reconcile, difficulties which it will task his whole strength to surmount, if his whole strength suffice. Everywhere the human soul stands between a hemisphere of light and another of darkness; on the confines of two everlastingly hostile empires, Necessity and Freewill. A pious adage says, 'the back is made for the burden;' we might with no less truth invert it, and say, the burden was made for the back. Nay, so perverse is the nature of man, it has in all times been found that an external allotment superior to the common was more dangerous than one inferior; thus for a hundred that can bear adversity, there is hardly one that can bear prosperity.

Of riches, in particular, as of the grossest species of prosperity, the perils are recorded by all moralists; and ever, as of old, must the sad observation from time to time occur: Easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle! Riches in a cultured community are the strangest of things; a power all-moving, yet which any the most powerless and skilless can *put* in motion; they are the *readiest* of possibilities; the readiest to become a great blessing or a great curse. 'Beneath gold thrones and mountains,' says Jean Paul, 'who knows how many giant spirits lie entombed!' The first fruit of riches, especially for the man born rich, is to teach him faith in them, and all but hide from him that there is any other faith: thus is he trained up in the miserable eye-service of what is called Honour, Respectability; instead of a man we have but a *gigman*, —one who 'always kept a gig,' two-wheeled or four-wheeled. Consider, too, what this same gigmanhood issues in; consider that first and most stupendous of gigmen, Phaeton, the son of Sol, who drove the brightest of all conceivable gigs, yet with the sorrowfulest result. Alas, Phaeton was his father's heir; born to attain the highest fortune without earning it: he had *built* no sun-chariot (could not build the simplest wheelbarrow), but could and would insist on *driving* one; and so broke his

own stiff neck, sent gig and horses spinning through infinite space, and set the universe on fire!—Or, to speak in more modest figures, Poverty, we may say, surrounds a man with ready-made barriers, which, if they mournfully gall and hamper, do at least prescribe for him and force on him a sort of course and goal; a safe and beaten though a circuitous course; great part of his guidance is secure against fatal error, is withdrawn from *his* control. The rich, again, has his whole life to guide, without goal or barrier, save of his own choosing; and tempted as we have seen, is too likely to guide it ill; often, instead of walking straight forward, as he might, does but, like Jeshurun, wax fat and kick; in which process, it is clear, not the adamantine circle of Necessity whereon the World is built, but only his own limb-bones must go to pieces!—Truly, in plain prose, if we bethink us what a road many a Byron and Mirabeau, especially in these latter generations, have gone, it is proof of an uncommon inward wealth in Goethe, that the outward wealth, whether of money or other happiness which Fortune offered him, did in no case exceed the power of Nature to appropriate and wholesomely assimilate; that all outward blessedness grew to inward strength, and produced only blessed effects for him. Those 'gold mountains' of Jean Paul, to the giant that *can* rise above them, are excellent, both fortified and speculatory, heights; and do in fact become a *throne*, where happily they have not been a *tomb*.

Goethe's childhood is throughout of riant, joyful character: kind plenty in every sense, security, affection, manifold excitement, instruction encircles him; wholly an element of sun and azure, wherein the young spirit, awakening and attaining, can on all hands richly unfold itself. A beautiful boy, of earnest, lucid, serenely deep nature, with the peaceful completeness yet infinite incessant expansiveness of a boy, has, in the fittest environment, begun to *be:* beautiful he looks and moves; rapid, gracefully prompt, like the son of Maia; wise, noble, like Latona's son: nay (as all men may *now* see) he is, in very truth, a miniature incipient World-Poet; of all heavenly figures the beautifulest we know of that can visit this lower earth. Lovely enough shine for us those young years in old Teutonic Frankfort; mirrored in the far remembrance of the Self-historian, real yet ideal, they are among our most genuine poetic Idyls.

No smallest matter is too small for us, when we think *who* it was that did it or suffered it. The little long-clothed urchin, mercurial enough with all his stillness, can throw a whole cargo of new-marketed crockery, piece by piece, from the balcony into the street, when once the feat is suggested to him; and comically shatters cheap delf-ware with the same right hand which tragically wrote and hurled forth the demoniac scorn of Mephistopheles, or as 'right hand' of Faust, 'smote the universe to ruins.' Neither smile more than enough (if thou be wise) that the gray-haired all-experienced man remembers how the boy walked on the Mayn bridge, and 'liked to look at the bright weather-cock' on the barrier there. That foolish piece of gilt wood, there glittering sunlit, with its reflex wavering in the Mayn waters, is awakening quite another glitter in the young gifted soul: is not this foolish sunlit splendour also, now when there is an *eye* to behold it, one of Nature's doings? The eye of the young seer is here, through the paltriest chink, looking into the infinite Splendours of Nature,—where, one day, himself is to enter and dwell.

Goethe's mother appears to have been the more gifted of the parents: a woman of altogether genial character, great spiritual faculty and worth; whom the son, at an after time, put old family friends in mind of. It is gratifying for us that she lived to witness his maturity in works and honours; to know that the little infant she had nursed was grown to be a mighty man, the first man of his nation and time. In the father, as prosperous citizen of Frankfort, skilled in many things; improved by travel, by studies both practical and ornamental; decorated with some diplomatic title, but passing, among his books, paintings, collections and household possessions, social or intellectual, spiritual or material, a quite undiplomatic independent life, we become acquainted with a German, not country- but city-*gentleman* of the last century; a character scarcely ever familiar in our Islands; now perhaps almost obsolete among the Germans too. A positive, methodical man, sound-headed, honest-hearted, sharp-tempered; with an uncommon share of volition, among other things, so that scarcely any obstacle would turn him back, but whatsoever he could not mount over he would struggle round, and in any case *be* at the end of his journey: many or all of whose good qualities passed also

over by inheritance; and, in fairer combination, on nobler objects, to the whole world's profit, were seen a second time in action.

Family incidents; house-buildings, or rebuildings; arrivals, departures; in any case, newyear's-days and birthdays, are not wanting; nor city-incidents; many-coloured tumult of Frankfort fairs; Kaisers' coronations, expected and witnessed; or that glorious ceremonial of the yearly *Pfeiffergericht*, wherein the grandfather himself plays so imperial a part. World-incidents too roll forth their billows into the remotest creek, and alter the current there. The Earthquake of Lisbon hurls the little Frankfort boy into wondrous depths of another sort; enunciating dark theological problems, which no theology of his will solve. Direction, instruction, in like manner, awaits him in the Great Frederic's Seven-Years War; especially in that long billeting of King's Lieutenant Comte de Thorane, with his sergeants and adjutants, with his painters and picture-easels, his quick precision and decision, his 'dry gallantry' and stately Spanish bearing;—though collisions with the 'house-father,' whose German house-stairs (though he silently endures the inevitable) were not new-built to be made a French highway of; who besides loves not the French, but the great invincible Fritz they are striving to beat down. Think, for example, of that singular congratulation on the Victory at Bergen:

'So then, at last, after a restless Passion-week, Passion-Friday, 1759, arrived. A deep stillness announced the approaching storm. We children were forbidden to leave the house; our father had no rest, and went out. The battle began; I mounted to the top story, where the field indeed was still out of my sight, but the thunder of the cannon and the volleys of the small arms could be fully discerned. After some hours, we saw the first tokens of the battle, in a row of wagons, whereon wounded men, in all sorts of sorrowful dismemberment and gesture, were driven softly past us to the Liebfrauen-Kloster, which had been changed into a hospital. The compassion of the citizens forthwith awoke. Beer, wine, bread, money were given to such as had still power of receiving. But when, erelong, wounded and captive Germans also were noticed in that train, the pity had no limits; it seemed as if each were bent to strip himself of whatever movable thing he had, to aid his countrymen therewith in their extremity.

'The prisoners, meanwhile, were the symptoms of a battle unprosperous for the Allies. My father, in his partiality, quite certain that these would gain, had the passionate rashness to go out to meet the

expected visitors; not reflecting that the beaten side would in that case have to run over him. He went first into his garden, at the Friedberg Gate, where he found all quiet and solitary; then ventured forth to the Bornheim Heath, where soon, however, various scattered outrunners and baggage-men came in sight, who took the satisfaction, as they passed, of shooting at the boundary-stones, and sent our eager wanderer the reverberated lead singing about his ears. He reckoned it wiser, therefore, to come back; and learned on some inquiry, what the sound of the firing might already have taught him, that for the French all went well, and no retreat was thought of. Arriving home full of black humour, he quite, at sight of his wounded and prisoner countrymen, lost all composure. From him also many a gift went out for the passing wagons, but only Germans were to taste of it; which arrangement, as Fate had so huddled friends and foes together, could not always be adhered to.

'Our mother, and we children, who had from the first built upon the Count's word, and so passed a tolerably quiet day, were greatly rejoiced, and our mother doubly comforted, as she that morning, on questioning the oracle of her jewel-box by the scratch of a needle, had obtained a most consolatory answer not only for the present but for the future. We wished our father a similar belief and disposition; we flattered him what we could, we entreated him to take some food, which he had forborne all day; he refused our caresses and every enjoyment, and retired to his room. Our joy, in the mean while, was not disturbed; the business was over: the King's Lieutenant, who to-day, contrary to custom, had been on horseback, at length returned; his presence at home was more needful than ever. We sprang out to meet him, kissed his hands, testified our joy. It seemed to please him greatly. "Well!" said he, with more softness than usual, "I am glad too for your sake, dear children." He ordered us sweetmeats, sweet wine, everything the best, and went to his chamber, where already a mass of importuners, solicitors, petitioners, were crowded.

'We held now a dainty collation; deplored our good father, who could not participate therein, and pressed our mother to bring him down; she, however, knew better, and how uncheering such gifts would be to him. Meanwhile she had put some supper in order, and would fain have sent him up a little to his room; but such irregularity was a thing he never suffered, not in extremest cases; so the sweet gifts being once put aside, she set about entreating him to come down in his usual way. He yielded at last, unwillingly, and little did we know what mischief we were making ready. The stairs ran free through the whole house, past the door of every ante-chamber. Our father, in descending, had to pass the Count's apartments. His ante-chamber was so full of people that he had at length resolved to come out, and despatch several at once; and this happened, alas, just at the instant our father was passing down. The Count stept cheerfully out, saluted

him and said: "You will congratulate us and yourself that this dangerous affair has gone off so happily."—"Not at all!" replied my father, with grim emphasis: "I wish they had chased you to the Devil, had I myself gone too." The Count held-in for a moment, then burst forth with fury: "You shall repent this! You shall not"——'

—Father Goethe, however, has 'in the mean while quietly descended,' and sat down to sup much cheerfuller than formerly; he little caring, 'we little knowing, in what questionable way he had rolled the stone from his heart,' and how official friends must interfere, and secret negotiations enough go on, to keep him out of military prison, and worse things that might have befallen there. On all which may we be permitted once again to make the simple reflection: What a plagued and plaguing world, with its battles and bombardments, wars and rumours of war (which sow or reap no ear of corn for any man), this is! The boy, who here watches the musket-volleys and cannon-thunders of the great Fritz, shall, as man, witness the siege of Mentz; fly with Brunswick Dukes before Dumouriez and his Sansculottes, through a country champed into one red world of mud, 'like Pharaoh' (for the carriage too breaks down) 'through the Red Sea;' and finally become involved in the universal fire-consummation of Napoleon, and by skill defend himself from hurt therein!

The father, with occasional subsidiary private tutors, is his son's schoolmaster; a somewhat pedantic pedagogue, with ambition enough and faithful goodwill, but more of rigour than of insight; who, however, works on a subject that he *cannot* spoil. Languages, to the number of six or seven, with whatsoever pertains to them; histories, syllabuses, knowledges-made-easy; not to speak of dancing, drawing, music, or, in due time, riding and fencing: all is taken-in with boundless appetite and aptitude; all is but fuel, injudiciously piled and of wet quality, yet under which works an unquenchable Greek-fire that will feed itself therewith, that will one day make it *all* clear and glowing. The paternal grandmother, recollected as a 'pale, thin, ever white and clean-dressed figure,' provides the children many a satisfaction; and at length, on some festive night, the crowning one of a puppet-show: whereupon ensues a long course of theatrical speculatings and practisings, somewhat as delineated, for another party, in the first book of *Meister's Apprenticeship;*

in which Work, indeed, especially in the earlier portion of it, some shadow of the author's personal experience and culture is more than once traceable. Thus Meister's desperate burnt-offering of his young 'Poems on various Occasions,' was the image of a reality which took place in Leipzig; performed desperately enough, 'on the kitchen hearth, the thick smoke from which, 'flowing through the whole house, filled our good landlady 'with alarm.'

Old Imperial-Freetown Frankfort is not without its notabilities, tragic or comic; in any case, impressive and didactic. The young heart is filled with boding to look into the *Judengasse* (Jew-gate), where squalid painful Hebrews are banished to scour old clothes, and in hate, and greed, and Old-Hebrew obstinacy and implacability, work out a wonderful prophetic existence, as 'a people terrible from the beginning;' manages, however, to get admittance to their synagogue, and see a wedding and a circumcision. On its spike, aloft on one of the steeples, grins, for the last two-hundred years, the bleached skull of a malefactor and traitor; properly, indeed, not so much a traitor, as a Radical whose Reform Bill could not be carried through. The future book-writer also, on one occasion, sees the execution of a book; how the huge printed reams rustle in the flames, are stirred-up with oven-forks, and fly half-charred aloft, the sport of winds; from which half-charred leaves, diligently picked up, he pieces himself a copy together, as did many others, and with double earnestness reads it.

As little is the old Freetown deficient in notable men; all accessible to a grandson of the Schultheiss,[4] who besides is a youth like no other. Of which originals, curious enough, and long since 'vanished from the sale-catalogues,' take only these two specimens:

'Von Reineck, of an old-noble house; able, downright, but stiff-necked; a lean black-brown man, whom I never saw smile. The misfortune befel him that his only daughter was carried-off by a friend of the family. He prosecuted his son-in-law with the most vehement suit; and as the courts, in their formality, would neither fast enough nor with force enough obey his vengeance, he fell-out with them; and

[4] *Schultheiss* is the title of the chief magistrate in some free-towns and republics, for instance, in Berne too. It seems to derive itself from *Schuldheissen*, and may mean the Teller of Duty, him by whom what *should* be is *kight*.

there arose quarrel on quarrel, process on process. He withdrew himself wholly into his house and the adjoining garden, lived in a spacious but melancholy under-room, where for many years no brush of a painter, perhaps scarcely the besom of a maid, had got admittance. Me he would willingly endure; had specially recommended me to his younger son. His oldest friends, who knew how to humour him, his men of business and agents he often had at table: and, on such occasions, he failed not to invite me. His board was well furnished, his buffet still better. His guests, however, had one torment, a large stove smoking out of many cracks. One of the most intimate ventured once to take notice of it, and ask the host whether he could stand such an inconvenience the whole winter. He answered, like a second Timon, and Heautontimorumenos: "Would to God this were the worst mischief of those that plague me!" Not till late would he be persuaded to admit daughter and grandson to his sight: the son-in-law was never more to show face before him.

'On this brave and unfortunate man my presence had a kind effect; for as he gladly spoke with me, in particular instructed me on political and state concerns, he seemed himself to feel assuaged and cheered. Accordingly, the few old friends who still kept about him, would often make use of me when they wished to soothe his indignant humour, and persuade him to any recreation. In fact he now more than once went out with us, and viewed the neighbourhood again, on which, for so many years, he had not turned an eye.' * * *

'Hofrath Huisgen, not a native of Frankfort; of the Reformed religion, and thus incapable of public office, of advocacy among the rest, which latter, however, as a man much trusted for juristic talent, he, under another's signature, contrived quite calmly to practise, as well in Frankfort as in the Imperial Courts,—might be about sixty when I happened to have writing-lessons along with his son, and so came into the house. His figure was large; tall without being bony, broad without corpulency. His face, deformed not only by small-pox, but wanting one of the eyes, you could not look on, for the first time, without apprehension. On his bald head he wore always a perfectly white bell-shaped cap (*Glockenmütze*) tied at top with a ribbon. His night-gowns, of calamanco or damask, were always as if new-washed. He inhabited a most cheerful suite of rooms on the ground floor in the *Allee*, and the neatness of everything about him corresponded to it. The high order of his books, papers, maps made a pleasant impression. His son, Heinrich Sebastian, who afterwards became known by various writings on Art, promised little in his youth. Good-natured but heavy, not rude yet artless, and without wish to instruct himself, he sought rather to avoid his father, as from his mother he could get whatever he wanted. I, on the other hand, came more and more into intimacy with the master the more I knew of him. As he meddled with none but important law-cases, he had time enough to amuse and occupy

himself with other things. I had not long been about him, and listened to his doctrine, till I came to observe that in respect of God and the World he stood on the opposition side. One of his pet books was *Agrippa de Vanitate Scientiarum;* this he particularly recommended me to read, and did therewith set my young brain, for a while, into considerable tumult. I, in the joy of my youth, was inclined to a sort of optimism, and with God or the Gods had now tolerably adjusted myself again; for, by a series of years, I had got to experience that there is many a balance against evil, that misfortunes are things one recovers from, that in dangers one finds deliverance, and does not always break his neck. On what men did and tried, moreover, I looked with tolerance, and found much praiseworthy which my old gentleman would nowise be content with. Nay, once, as he had been depicting me the world not a little on the crabbed side, I noticed in him that he meant still to finish with a trump-card. He shut, as in such cases his wont was, the blind left eye close; looked with the other broad out; and said, in a snuffling voice: "*Auch in Gott entdeck' ich Fehler.*"'

Of a gentler character is the reminiscence of the maternal grandfather, old Schultheiss Textor; with his gift of prophetic dreaming, 'which endowment none of his descendants inherited;' with his kind, mild ways; there as he glides about in his garden, at evening, 'in black-velvet cap,' trimming 'the finer sort of fruit-trees,' with aid of those antique embroidered gloves or gauntlets, yearly handed him at the *Pfeiffergericht:* a soft, spirit-looking figure; the farthest outpost of the Past, which behind him melts into dim vapour. In Frau von Klettenberg, a religious associate of the mother's, we become acquainted with the *Schöne Seele* (Fair Saint) of *Meister;* she, at an after period, studied to convert her *Philo,* but only very partially succeeded. Let us notice also, as a token for good, how the young universal spirit takes pleasure in the workshops of handicraftsmen, and loves to understand their methods of labouring and of living:

'My father had early accustomed me to manage little matters for him. In particular, it was often my commission to stir-up the craftsmen he employed; who were too apt to loiter with him; as he wanted to have all accurately done, and finally for prompt payment to have the price moderated. I came, in this way, into almost all manner of workshops; and as it lay in my nature to shape myself into the circumstances of others, to feel every species of human existence, and with satisfaction participate therein, I spent many pleasant hours in such places; grew to understand the procedure of each, and what of joy

and of sorrow, advantage or drawback, the indispensable conditions of this or that way of life brought with them. * * * The household economy of the various crafts, which took its figure and colour from the occupation of each, was also silently an object of attention; and so unfolded, so confirmed itself in me the feeling of the equality, if not of all men, yet of all men's situations; existence by itself appearing as the head condition, all the rest as indifferent and accidental.'

And so, amid manifold instructive influences, has the boy grown out of boyhood; when now a new figure enters on the scene, bringing far higher revelations:

'As at last the wine was failing, one of them called the maid; but instead of her there came a maiden of uncommon, and to see her in this environment, of incredible beauty. "What is it?" said she, after kindly giving us good-evening: "the maid is ill and gone to bed: can I serve you?"—"Our wine is done," said one; "couldst thou get us a couple of bottles over the way, it were very good of thee."—"Do it, Gretchen," said another, "it is but a cat's-leap."—"Surely!" said she; took a couple of empty bottles from the table, and hastened out. Her figure, when she turned away from you, was almost prettier than before. The little cap sat so neat on the little head, which a slim neck so gracefully united with back and shoulders. Everything about her seemed select; and you could follow the whole form more calmly, as attention was not now attracted and arrested by the true still eyes and lovely mouth alone.'

It is at the very threshold of youth that this episode of Gretchen (Margarete, Mar-*g'ret'-kin*) occurs; the young critic of slim necks and true still eyes shall now know something of natural magic, and the importance of one mortal to another; the wild-flowing bottomless sea of human Passion, glorious in auroral light (which, alas, may become infernal lightning), unveils itself a little to him. A graceful little episode we reckon it; and Gretchen better than most first-loves: wholly an innocent, wise, dainty maiden; pure and poor,—who vanishes from us here; but, we trust, in some quiet nook of the Rhineland, became wife and mother, and was the joy and sorrow of some brave man's heart, according as it is appointed. To the boy himself it ended painfully, almost fatally, had not sickness come to his deliverance; and here too he may experience how 'a shadow chases us in all manner of sunshine,' and in this *What-d'ye-call-it* of Existence the tragic element is not

wanting. The name of Gretchen, not her story, which had nothing in it of that guilt and terror, has been made world-famous in the Play of *Faust*.—

Leipzig University has the honour of matriculating him. The name of his 'propitious mother' she may boast of, but not of the reality: alas, in these days, the University of the Universe is the only propitious mother of such; all other propitious mothers are but unpropitious superannuated dry-nurses fallen bedrid, from whom the famished nurseling has to *steal* even bread and water, if he will not die; whom for most part he soon takes leave of, giving perhaps (as in Gibbon's case), for farewell thanks, some rough tweak of the nose; and rushes desperate into the wide world an orphan. The time is advancing, slower or faster, when the bedrid dry-nurse will decease, and be succeeded by a walking and stirring wet one. Goethe's employments and culture at Leipzig lay in quite other groves than the academic: he listened to the Ciceronian Ernesti with eagerness, but the life-giving word flowed not from his mouth; to the sacerdotal, eclectic-sentimental Gellert (the divinity of all tea-table moral-philosophers of both sexes); witnessed 'the pure 'soul, the genuine will of the noble man,' heard 'his admoni-'tions, warnings and entreaties, uttered in a somewhat hollow 'and melancholy tone;' and then the Frenchman say to it all, "*Laissez le faire; il nous forme des dupes.*" 'In logic it 'seemed to me very strange that I must now take-up those 'spiritual operations which from of old I had executed with the 'utmost convenience, and tatter them asunder, insulate and as 'if destroy them, that their right employment might become 'plain to me. Of the Thing, of the World, of God, I fancied 'I knew almost about as much as the Doctor himself; and he 'seemed to me, in more than one place, to hobble dreadfully '(*gewaltig zu hapern*).'

However, he studies to some profit with the Painter Oeser; hears, one day, at the door, with horror, that there is no lesson, for news of Winkelmann's assassination have come. With the ancient Gottsched, too, he has an interview: alas, it is a young Zeus come to dethrone old Saturn, whose time in the literary heaven is nigh run; for on Olympus itself, one Demiurgus passeth away and another cometh. Gottsched had introduced the reign of *water*, in all shapes liquid and solid, and long

gloriously presided over the same; but now there is enough of it, and the 'rayless majesty' (had he been prophetic) here beheld the rayed one, before whom he was to melt away:

'We announced ourselves. The servant led us into a large room, and said his master would come immediately. Whether we misinterpreted a motion he made I cannot say; at any rate, we fancied he had beckoned us to advance into an adjoining chamber. We did advance, and to a singular scene; for, at the same moment, Gottsched, the huge broad gigantic man, entered from the opposite door, in green damask nightgown, lined with red taffeta; but his enormous head was bald and without covering. This, however, was the very want to be now supplied: for the servant came springing-in at the side-door, with a full-bottomed wig on his hand (the locks fell down to his elbow), and held it out, with terrified gesture, to his master. Gottsched, without uttering the smallest complaint, lifted the head-gear with his left hand from the servant's arm; and very deftly swinging it up to its place on the head, at the same time, with his right hand, gave the poor man a box on the ear, which, as is seen in comedies, dashed him spinning out of the apartment; whereupon the respectable-looking Patriarch quite gravely desired us to be seated, and with proper dignity went through a tolerably long discourse.'

In which discourse, however, it is likely, little edification for the young inquirer could lie. Already by multifarious discoursings and readings he has convinced himself, to his despair, of the watery condition of the Gottschedic world, and how 'the '*Noachide* (Noaheid) of Bodmer is a true symbol of the deluge 'that has swelled-up round the German Parnassus,' and in literature as in philosophy there is neither landmark nor loadstar. Here, too, he resumes his inquiries about religion, falls into 'black scruples' about most things; and in 'the bald and feeble deliverances' propounded him has sorry comfort. Outward things, moreover, go not as they should: the copious philosophic harlequinades of that wag, Beyrish 'with a long nose,' unsettle rather than settle; as do, in many ways, other wise and foolish mortals of both sexes: matters grow worse and worse. He falls sick, becomes wretched enough; yet unfolds withal 'an audacious humour which feels itself supe-'rior to the moment, not only fears no danger, but even wil-'fully courts it.' And thus, somewhat in a wrecked state, he quits his propitious mother, and returns home.

Nevertheless let there be no reflections: he must now in

earnest get forward with his Law, and on to Strasburg to complete himself therein; so has the paternal judgment arranged it. A Lawyer, the thing in these latter days called Lawyer, of a man in whom ever-bounteous Nature has sent us a Poet for the World! O blind mortals, blind over what lies closest to us, what we have the truest wish to see! In this young colt that caprioles there in young lustihood, and snuffs the wind with an 'audacious humour,' rather dangerous-looking, no Sleswic Dobbin, to rise to dromedary stature, and draw three tons avoirdupois (of street-mud or whatever else), has been vouchsafed; but a winged miraculous Pegasus to carry us to the heavens! — Whereon too (if we consider it) many a heroic Bellerophon shall, in times coming, mount, and destroy Chimæras, and deliver afflicted nations on the lower earth.

Meanwhile, be this as it may, the youth is gone to Strasburg to prepare for the *examen rigorosum;* though, as it turned out, for quite a different than the Law one. Confusion enough is in his head and heart; poetic objects too have taken root there, and will not rest till they have worked themselves into form. 'These,' says he, 'were Götz von Berlichingen and 'Faust. The written Life of the former had seized my inmost 'soul. The figure of a rude well-meaning self-helper, in wild 'anarchic time, excited my deepest sympathy. The impres-'sive puppet-show Fable of the other sounded and hummed 'through me many-toned enough.'—'Let us withdraw, how-'ever,' subjoins he, 'into the free air, to the high broad plat-'form of the Minster; as if the time were still here, when we 'young ones often rendezvoused thither to salute, with full 'rummers, the sinking sun.' They had good telescopes with them; 'and one friend after another searched out the spot in 'the distance which had become the dearest to him; neither 'was I without a little eye-mark of the like, which, though it 'rose not conspicuous in the landscape, drew me to it beyond 'all else with a kindly magic.' This alludes, we perceive, to that Alsatian Vicar of Wakefield, and his daughter the fair Frederike; concerning which matter a word may not be useless here. Exception has been taken by certain tender souls, of the all-for-love sort, against Goethe's conduct in that business. He flirted with his blooming blue-eyed Alsatian, she with him, innocently enough, thoughtlessly enough, till they

both came to love each other; and then, when the marrying point began to grow visible in the distance, he stopt short and would no farther. Adieu, he cried, and waved his lily hand. 'The good Frederike was weeping; I too was sick enough at heart.' Whereupon arises the question: Is Goethe a bad man; or is he not a bad man? Alas, worthy souls! if this world were all a wedding-dance, and *Thou-shalt* never came into collision with *Thou-wilt*, what a new improved time had we of it! But it is man's miserable lot, in the mean while, to eat and labour as well as wed; alas, how often, like Corporal Trim, does he spend the whole night, one moment dividing the world into two halves with his fair Beguine, next moment remembering that he has only a knapsack and fifteen florins to divide with any one! Besides, you do not consider that our dear Frederike, whom we too could weep for if it served, had a sound German heart within her stays; had furthermore abundance of *work* to do, and not even leisure to die of love; above all, that at this period, in the country parts of Alsatia, there were no circulating-library novels.

With regard to the false one's cruelty of temper, who, if we remember, saw a ghost in broad noon that day he rode away from her, let us, on the other hand, hear Jung Stilling, for he also had experience thereof at this very date. Poor Jung, a sort of German Dominie Sampson, awkward, honest, irascible, 'in old-fashioned clothes and bag-wig,' who had been several things, charcoal-burner, and, in repeated alternation, tailor and schoolmaster, was now come to Strasburg to study medicine; with purse long-necked, yet with head that had brains in it, and heart full of trust in God. A pious soul, who if he did afterwards write books on the Nature of Departed Spirits, also restored to sight (by his skill in eye-operations) above *two thousand poor blind persons*, without fee or reward, even supporting many of them in the hospital at his own expense.

'There dined,' says he, 'at this table about twenty people, whom the two comrades' (Troost and I) 'saw one after the other enter. One especially, with large bright eyes, magnificent brow, and fine stature, walked gallantly (*muthig*) in. He drew Herr Troost's and Stilling's eyes on him; Herr Troost said, "That must be a superior man." Stilling assented, yet thought they would both have much vexation from

him, as he looked like one of your wild fellows. This did Stilling infer from the frank style which the student had assumed; but here he was far mistaken. They found, meanwhile, that this distinguished individual was named Herr Goethe.

'Herr Troost whispered to Stilling, "Here it were best one sat seven days silent." Stilling felt this truth; they sat silent therefore, and no one particularly minded them, except that Goethe now and then hurled over (*herüberwälzte*) a look: he sat opposite Stilling, and had the government of the table without aiming at it.

'Herr Troost was neat, and dressed in the fashion; Stilling likewise tolerably so. He had a dark-brown coat with fustian under-garments: only that a scratch-wig also remained to him, which, among his bag-wigs, he would wear out. This he had put on one day, and came therewith to dinner. Nobody took notice of it except Herr Waldberg of Vienna. That gentleman looked at him; and as he had already heard that Stilling was greatly taken up about religion, he began, and asked him, Whether he thought Adam in Paradise had worn a scratch-wig? All laughed heartily, except Salzman, Goethe and Troost; these did not laugh. In Stilling wrath rose and burnt, and he answered: "Be ashamed of this jest; such a trivial thing is not worth laughing at!" But Goethe struck-in and added: "Try a man first whether he deserves mockery. It is devil-like to fall upon an honest-hearted person who has injured nobody, and make sport of him!" From that time Herr Goethe took up Stilling, visited him, liked him, made friendship and brothership with him, and strove by all opportunities to do him kindness. Pity that so few are acquainted with this noble man in respect of his heart!'[5]

Here, indeed, may be the place to mention, that this noble man, in respect of his heart, and goodness and badness, is not altogether easy to get acquainted with; that innumerable persons, of the man-milliner, parish-clerk and circulating-library sort, will find him a hard nut to crack. Hear in what questionable manner, so early as the year 1773, he expresses himself towards Herr Sulzer, whose beautiful hypothesis, that 'Nature meant, by the constant influx of satisfactions stream-'ing-in upon us, to fashion our minds, on the whole, to softness 'and sensibility,' he will not leave a leg to stand on. '*On 'the whole*,' says he, 'she does no such thing; she rather, God 'be thanked, hardens her genuine children against the pains '*and* evils she incessantly prepares for them; so that we name 'him the happiest man who is the strongest to make front 'against evil, to put it aside from him, and in defiance of it go

[5] *Stillings Wanderschaft.* Berlin and Leipzig, 1778.

'the road of his own will.' 'Man's art in all situations is to 'fortify himself against Nature, to avoid her thousandfold ills, 'and only to enjoy his measure of the good; till at length he 'manages to include the whole circulation of his true and fac- 'titious wants in a palace, and fix as far as possible all scat- 'tered beauty and felicity within his glass walls, where accord- 'ingly he grows ever the weaker, takes to "joys of the soul," 'and his powers, roused to their natural exertion by no contra- 'diction, melt away into'—*horresco referens*—'Virtue, Bene- 'volence, Sensibility!' In Goethe's Writings too, we all know, the moral lesson is seldom so easily educed as one would wish. Alas, how seldom is he so direct in tendency as his own plain-spoken moralist at Plundersweilern:

'Dear Christian people, one and all,
When will you cease your sinning?
Else can your comfort be but small,
Good hap scarce have beginning:
For Vice is hurtful unto man,
In Virtue lies his surest plan;'

or, to give it in the original words, the emphasis of which no foreign idiom can imitate:

'*Die Tugend ist das hochste Gut,*
Das Laster Weh dem Menschen thut!'

In which emphatic couplet, does there not, as the critics say in other cases, lie the essence of whole volumes, such as we have read?—

Goethe's far most important relation in Strasburg was the accidental temporary one with Herder; which issued, indeed, in a more permanent, though at no time an altogether intimate one. Herder, with much to give, had always something to require; living with him seems never to have been wholly a sinecure. Goethe and he moreover were fundamentally different, not to say discordant; neither could the humour of the latter be peculiarly sweetened by his actual business in Strasburg, that of undergoing a surgical operation on 'the lachrymatory duct,' and, above all, an unsuccessful one:

'He was attending the Prince of Holstein-Eutin, who laboured under mental distresses, on a course of travel; and had arrived with him at Strasburg. Our society, so soon as his presence there was known,

felt a strong wish to get near him; which happiness, quite unexpectedly and by chance, befel me first. I had gone to the Inn *zum Geist*, visiting I forget what stranger of rank. Just at the bottom of the stairs I came upon a man, like myself about to ascend, whom by his look I could take to be a clergyman. His powdered hair was fastened-up into a round lock, the black coat also distinguished him; still more a long black silk mantle, the end of which he had gathered together and stuck into his pocket. This in some measure surprising, yet on the whole gallant and pleasing figure, of whom I had already heard speak, left me no doubt but it was the famed Traveller; and my address soon convinced him that he was known to me. He asked my name, which could not be of any significance to him; however, my openness seemed to give pleasure, for he replied to it in friendly style, and as we stept upstairs, forthwith showed himself ready for a lively communication. Our visit also was to the same party; and before separating I begged permission to wait upon himself, which he kindly enough accorded me. I delayed not to make repeated use of this preferment; and was the longer the more attracted towards him. He had something softish in his manner, which was fit and dignified, without strictly being bred. A round face; a fine brow; a somewhat short blunt nose; a somewhat projected, yet highly characteristic, pleasant, amiable mouth. Under black eyebrows, a pair of coal-black eyes, which failed not of their effect, though one of them was wont to be red and inflamed.'

With this gifted man, by five years his senior, whose writings had already given him a name, and announced the much that lay in him, the open-hearted disciple could manifoldly communicate, learning and enduring. Erelong, under that 'softish manner,' there disclosed itself a 'counterpulse' of causticity, of ungentle almost noisy banter; the blunt nose was too often curled in an adunco-suspensive manner. Whatsoever of self-complacency, of acquired attachment and insight, of self-sufficiency well or ill grounded, lay in the youth, was exposed, we can fancy, to the severest trial. In Herder too, as in an expressive microcosm, he might see imaged the whole wild world of German literature, of European Thought; its old workings and misworkings, its best recent tendencies and efforts; what its past and actual wasteness, perplexity, confusion worse confounded, was. In all which, moreover, the bantered, yet imperturbably inquiring brave young man had quite other than a theoretic interest, being himself minded to dwell there. It is easy to conceive that Herder's presence, stirring-up in that fashion so many new and old matters, would mightily aggravate

the former 'fermentation;' and thereby, it is true, unintentionally or not, forward the same towards clearness.

In fact, with the hastiest glance over the then position of the world spiritual, we shall find that as Disorder is never wanting (and for the young spiritual hero, who is there only to destroy Disorder and make it Order, can least of all be wanting), so, at the present juncture, it specially abounded. Why dwell on this often-delineated Epoch? Over all Europe the reign of Earnestness had now wholly dwindled into that of Dilettantism. The voice of a certain modern 'closet-logic,' which called itself, and could not but call itself, Philosophy, had gone forth, saying, Let there be darkness, and there was darkness. No Divinity any longer dwelt in the world; and as men cannot do without a Divinity, a sort of terrestrial-upholstery one had been got together, and named TASTE, with medallic virtuosi and picture cognoscenti, and enlightened letter and belles-lettres men enough for priests. To which worship, with its stunted formularies and hungry results, must the earnest mind, like the hollow and shallow one, adjust itself, as best might be. To a new man, no doubt, the Earth is always new, never wholly without interest. Knowledge, were it only that of dead languages, or of dead actions, the foreign tradition of what others had acquired and done, was still to be searched after; fame might be enjoyed if procurable; above all, the culinary and brewing arts remained in pristine completeness, their results could be relished with pristine vigour. Life lumbered along, better or worse, in pitiful discontent, not yet in decisive desperation, as through a dim day of languor, sultry and sunless. Already, too, on the horizon might be seen clouds, might be heard murmurs, which by and by proved themselves of an electric character, and were to cool and clear that same sultriness in wondrous deluges.

To a man standing in the midst of German literature, and looking out thither for his highest good, the view was troubled perhaps with various peculiar perplexities. For two centuries, German literature had lain in the sere leaf. The Luther, 'whose words were half battles,' and such half battles as could shake and overset half Europe with their cannonading, had long since gone to sleep; and all other words were but the miserable bickering of theological camp-suttlers in quarrel over the stripping of the slain. Ulrich Hutten slept silent, in the little island

of the Zurich Lake ; the weary and heavy-laden had wiped the sweat from his brow, and laid him down to rest there : the valiant, fire-tempered heart, with all its woes and loves and loving indignations, mouldered, cold, forgotten ; with such a pulse no new heart rose to beat. The tamer Opitzes and Flemmings of a succeeding era had, in like manner, long fallen obsolete. One unhappy generation after another of pedants, 'rhizophagous,' living on roots, Greek or Hebrew ; of farce-writers, gallant-verse writers, journalists and other jugglers of nondescript sort, wandered in nomadic wise, whither provender was to be had; among whom, if a passionate Gunther go with some emphasis to ruin ; if an illuminated Thomasius, earlier than the general herd, deny witchcraft, we are to esteem it a felicity. This too, however, has passed ; and now, in manifold enigmatical signs, a new Time announces itself. Well-born Hagedorns, munificent Gleims have again rendered the character of Author honourable ; the polish of correct, assiduous Rabeners and Ramlers have smoothed away the old impurities ; a pious Klopstock, to the general enthusiasm, rises anew into something of seraphic music, though by methods wherein he can have no follower ; the brave spirit of a Lessing pierces, in many a life-giving ray, through the dark inertness : Germany has risen to a level with Europe, is henceforth participant of all European influences ; nay it is now appointed, though not yet ascertained, that Germany is to be the leader of spiritual Europe. A deep movement agitates the universal mind of Germany, though as yet no one sees towards what issue ; only that heavings and eddyings, confused conflicting tendencies, work unquietly everywhere ; the movement is begun and will not stop, but the course of it is yet far from ascertained. Even to the young man now looking-on with such anxious intensity had this very task been allotted : To find it a course, and set it flowing thereon.

Whoever will represent this confused revolutionary condition of all things, has but to fancy how it would act on the most susceptive and comprehensive of living minds ; what a Chaos he had taken in, and was dimly struggling to body-forth into a Creation. Add to which, his so confused, contradictory personal condition ; appointed by a positive father to be practitioner of Law, by a still more positive mother (old Nature herself) to be practitioner of Wisdom, and Captain of spiritual

Europe: we have confusion enough for him, doubts economic and doubts theologic, doubts moral and æsthetical, a whole world of confusion and doubt.

Nevertheless to the young Strasburg student the gods had given their most precious gift, which is worth all others, without which all others are worth nothing; a seeing eye and a faithful loving heart:

> '*Er hatt' ein Auge treu und klug,*
> *Und war auch liebevoll genug,*
> *Zu schauen manches klar und rein,*
> *Und wieder alles zu machen sein;*
> *Hatt' auch eine Zunge die sich ergoss,*
> *Und leicht und fein in Worte floss;*
> *Dess thaten die Musen sich erfreun,*
> *Wollten ihn zum Meistersänger weihn.*'[6]

A mind of all-piercing vision, of sunny strength, not made to ray-out darker darkness, but to bring warm sunlight, all-purifying, all-uniting. A clear, invincible mind, and 'consecrated to be Master-singer' in quite another guild than that Nürnberg one.

His first literary productions fall in his twenty-third year; *Werter*, the most celebrated of these, in his twenty-fifth. Of which wonderful Book, and its now recognised character as poetic (and prophetic) utterance of the World's Despair, it is needless to repeat what has elsewhere been written. This and *Götz von Berlichingen*, which also, as a poetic looking-back into the past, was a word for the world, have produced incalculable effects;—which now indeed, however some departing echo of them may linger in the wrecks of our own Mosstrooper and Satanic Schools, do at length all happily lie behind us. Some trifling incidents at Wetzlar, and the suicide of an unhappy acquaintance, were the means of 'crystallising' that wondrous perilous stuff, which the young heart oppressively held dissolved in it, into this world-famous, and as it proved world-medicative *Werter*. He had gone to Wetzlar with an eye still to Law; which now, however, was abandoned, never to be resumed. Thus did he too, 'like Saul the son of Kish,

[6] *Hans Sachsens Poetische Sendung* (*Goethes Werke*, xiii.); a beautiful piece (a very *Hans Sachs beatified*, both in character and style), which we wish there was any possibility of translating.

'go out to seek his father's asses, and instead thereof find a 'kingdom.'

With the completion of these two Works (a completion in every sense, for they were not only emitted, but speedily also *de*mitted, and seen over, and left behind), commences what we can specially call his Life, his activity as Man. The outward particulars of it, from this point where his own Narrative ends, have been briefly summed-up in these terms:

'In 1776, the Heir-apparent of Weimar was passing through Frankfort, on which occasion, by the intervention of some friends, he waited upon Goethe. The visit must have been mutually agreeable; for a short time afterwards the young Author was invited to court; apparently to contribute his assistance in various literary institutions and arrangements then proceeding or contemplated; and in pursuance of this honourable call, he accordingly settled at Weimar, with the title of *Legationsrath*, and the actual dignity of a place in the *Collegium*, or Council. The connexion begun under such favourable auspices, and ever afterwards continued under the like or better, has been productive of important consequences, not only to Weimar but to all Germany. The noble purpose undertaken by the Duchess Amelia was zealously forwarded by the young Duke on his accession; under whose influence, supported and directed by his new Councillor, this inconsiderable state has gained for itself a fairer distinction than any of its larger, richer or more warlike neighbours. By degrees whatever was brightest in the genius of Germany had been gathered to this little court; a classical theatre was under the superintendence of Goethe and Schiller; here Wieland taught and sung; in the pulpit was Herder; and possessing such a four, the small town of Weimar, some five-and-twenty years ago, might challenge the proudest capital of the world to match it in intellectual wealth. Occupied so profitably to his country, and honourably to himself, Goethe continued rising in favour with his Prince; by degrees a political was added to his literary trust; in 1779 he became Privy Councillor; President in 1782; and at length after his return from Italy, where he had spent two years in varied studies and observation, he was appointed Minister; a post which he only a few years ago resigned, on his final retirement from public affairs.'

Notable enough that little Weimar should, in this particular, have brought back, as it were, an old Italian Commonwealth into the nineteenth century! For the Petrarcas and Boccaccios, though reverenced as Poets, were not supposed to have lost their wits as men; but could be employed in the highest services of the state, not only as fit, but as the fittest, to discharge

these. Very different with us, where Diplomatists and Governors can be picked up from the highways, or chosen in the manner of blindman's buff (the first figure you clutch, say rather that clutches *you*, will make a governor); and, even in extraordinary times, it is thought much if a Milton can become Latin Clerk under some Bulstrode Whitelock, and be called 'one Mr. Milton.' As if the poet, with his poetry, were no other than a pleasant mountebank, with faculty of a certain ground-and-lofty tumbling which would amuse; for which you must throw him a few coins, a little flattery, otherwise he would not amuse you with it. As if there were any talent whatsoever; above all, as if there were any talent of Poetry (by the consent of all ages the highest talent, and sometimes pricelessly high), the first foundation of which were not even these two things (properly but one thing): intellectual Perspicacity, with force and honesty of Will. Which two, do they not, in their simplest quite naked form, constitute the very equipment a Man of Business needs; the very implements whereby *all* business, from that of the delver and ditcher to that of the legislator and imperator, is accomplished; as in their noblest concentration they are still the moving faculty of the Artist and Prophet!

To Goethe himself this connexion with Weimar opened the happiest course of life which, probably, the age he lived in could have yielded him. Moderation, yet abundance; elegance without luxury or sumptuosity: Art enough to give a heavenly firmament to his existence; Business enough to give it a solid earth. In his multifarious duties he comes in contact with all manner of men; gains experience and tolerance of all men's ways. A faculty like his, which could master the highest spiritual problems and conquer Evil Spirits in their own domain, was not likely to be foiled by such when they put-on the simpler shape of material clay. The greatest of Poets is also the skilfulest of Managers: the little terrestrial Weimar trust committed to him prospers; and one sees with a sort of smile, in which may lie a deep seriousness, how the Jena Museums, University arrangements, Weimar Art-exhibitions and Palace-buildings, are guided smoothly on, by a hand which could have worthily swayed imperial sceptres. The world, could it intrust its imperial sceptres to such hands, were blessed: nay to this man, without the world's consent given or asked, a still higher function *had* been

committed. But on the whole, we name his external life happy, among the happiest, in this, that a noble princely Courtesy could dwell in it, based on the worship, by speech and practice, of Truth only (for his victory, as we said above, was so complete, as almost to hide that there had been a struggle), and the worldly could praise him as the most agreeable of men, and the spiritual as the highest and clearest; but happy above all, in this, that it forwarded him, as no other could have done, in his inward life, the good or evil hap of which was alone of permanent importance.

The inward life of Goethe, onward from this epoch, lies nobly recorded in the long series of his Writings. Of these, meanwhile, the great bulk of our English world has nowise yet got to such understanding and mastery, that we could with much hope of profit, go into a critical examination of their merits and characteristics. Such a task can stand-over till the day for it arrive; be it in this generation, or the next, or after the next. What has been elsewhere already set forth suffices the present want, or needs only to be repeated and enforced; the expositor of German things must say, with judicious Zanga in the play: "First recover that, then shalt thou know more." A glance over the grand outlines of the matter, and more especially under the aspect suitable to these days, can alone be in place here.

In *Goethe's Works*, chronologically arranged, we see this above all things: A mind working itself into clearer and clearer freedom; gaining a more and more perfect dominion of its world. The pestilential fever of Scepticism runs through its stages; but happily it ends and disappears at the last stage, not in death, not in chronic malady (the commonest way), but in clearer, henceforth invulnerable health. *Werter* we called the voice of the world's despair: passionate, uncontrollable is this voice; not yet melodious and supreme,—as nevertheless we at length hear it in the wild apocalyptic *Faust:* like a death-song of departing worlds; no voice of joyful 'morning stars singing together' over a Creation; but of red nigh-extinguished midnight stars, in spheral swan-melody, proclaiming, It is ended!

What follows, in the next period, we might, for want of a

fitter term, call Pagan or Ethnic in character; meaning thereby an anthropomorphic character, akin to that of old Greece and Rome. *Wilhelm Meister* is of that stamp: warm, hearty, sunny human Endeavour; a free recognition of Life, in its depth, variety and majesty; as yet no Divinity recognised there. The famed *Venetian Epigrams* are of the like Old Ethnic tone: musical, joyfully strong; true, yet not the whole truth, and sometimes in their blunt realism jarring on the sense. As in this, oftener cited perhaps, by a certain class of wise men, than the due proportion demanded:

Why so bustleth the People and crieth?—Would find itself victual,
Children too would beget, feed on the best may be had!
Mark in thy notebooks, Traveller, this, and at home go do likewise:
Farther reacheth no man, make he what stretching he will.

Doubt, reduced into Denial, now lies prostrate under foot: the fire has done its work, an old world is in ashes; but the smoke and the flame are blown away, and a sun again shines clear over the ruin, to raise therefrom a new nobler verdure and flowerage. Till at length, in the third or final period, melodious Reverence becomes triumphant; a deep all-pervading Faith, with mild voice, grave as gay, speaks forth to us in a *Meisters Wanderjahre*, in a *West-Œstlicher Divan;* in many a little *Zahme Xenie*, and true-hearted little rhyme, 'which,' it has been said, 'for pregnancy and genial significance, except in the 'Hebrew Scriptures, you will nowhere match.' As here, striking-in almost at a venture:

Like as a Star,
That maketh not haste,
That taketh not rest,
Be each one fulfilling
His god-given Hest.[7]

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[7] *Wie das Gestirn,*
Ohne Hast,
Aber ohne Rast,
Drehe sich jeder
Um die eigne Last.

So stands it in the original; hereby, however, hangs a tale:
'A fact,' says one of our fellow-labourers in this German vineyard, 'has 'but now come to our knowledge, which we take pleasure and pride in 'stating. Fifteen Englishmen, entertaining that high consideration for the

Or this small Couplet, which the reader, if he will, may substitute for whole horse-loads of *Essays on the Origin of Evil;* a spiritual manufacture which, in these enlightened times, ought ere now to have gone out of fashion:

> "What shall I teach thee, the foremost thing?"
> Couldst teach me off my own Shadow to spring!

Or the pathetic picturesqueness of this:

> A rampart-breach is every Day,
> Which many mortals are storming:
> Fall in the gap who may,
> Of the slain no heap is forming.
>
> *Eine Bresche ist jeder Tag,*
> *Die viele Menschen erstürmen;*
> *Wer da auch fallen mag,*
> *Die Todten sich niemals thürmen.*

In such spirit, and with an eye that takes-in all provinces of human Thought, Feeling and Activity, does the Poet stand forth as the true prophet of his time; victorious over its con-

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'good Goethe, which the labours and high deserts of a long life usefully 'employed so richly merit from all mankind, have presented him with a 'highly-wrought Seal, as a token of their veneration.' We must pass over the description of the gift, for it would be too elaborate; suffice it to say, that amid tasteful carving and emblematic embossing enough, stood these words engraven on a gold belt, on the four sides respectively: *To the German Master: From Friends in England: 28th August:* 1831; finally, that the impression was a star encircled with a serpent-of-eternity, and this motto: *Ohne Hast Aber Ohne Rast.*

'The following is the Letter which accompanied it:

'"*To the Poet Goethe, on the 28th of August* 1831.

'"Sir,—Among the friends whom this so interesting Anniversary calls 'round you, may we 'English friends,' in thought and symbolically, since 'personally it is impossible, present ourselves to offer you our affectionate 'congratulations. We hope you will do us the honour to accept this little 'Birthday Gift, which, as a true testimony of our feelings, may not be without value.

'"We said to ourselves: As it is always the highest duty and pleasure to 'show reverence to whom reverence is due, and our chief, perhaps our only 'benefactor is he who by act and word instructs us in wisdom,—so we, 'undersigned, feeling towards the Poet Goethe as the spiritually taught 'towards their spiritual teacher, are desirous to express that sentiment 'openly and in common; for which end we have determined to solicit his 'acceptance of a small English gift, proceeding from us all equally, on his 'approaching birthday; that so, while the venerable man still dwells among

tradiction, possessor of its wealth; embodying the nobleness of the past into a new whole, into a new vital nobleness for the present and the future. Antique nobleness in all kinds, yet worn with new clearness; the spirit of it is preserved and again revealed in shape, when the former shape and vesture had become old (as vestures do), and was dead and cast forth; and we mourned as if the spirit too were gone. This, we are aware, is a high saying; applicable to no other man living, or that has lived for some two centuries; ranks Goethe, not only as the highest man of his time, but as a man of universal Time, important for all generations,—one of the landmarks in the History of Men.

Thus, from our point of view, does Goethe rise on us as the Uniter, and victorious Reconciler, of the distracted, clashing elements of the most distracted and divided age that the world

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'us, some memorial of the gratitude we owe him, and think the whole 'world owes him, may not be wanting.

'"And thus our little tribute, perhaps among the purest that men could 'offer to man, now stands in visible shape, and begs to be received. May 'it be welcome, and speak permanently of a most close relation, though 'wide seas flow between the parties!

'"We pray that many years may be added to a life so glorious, that all 'happiness may be yours, and strength given to complete your high task, 'even as it has hitherto proceeded, like a star, without haste, yet without 'rest.

'"We remain, Sir, your friends and servants,

'"FIFTEEN ENGLISHMEN."

'The wonderful old man, to whom distant and unknown friends had 'paid such homage, could not but be moved at sentiments expressed in such 'terms. We hear that he values the token highly, and has condescended 'to return the following lines for answer:

"DEN FUNFZEHN ENGLISCHEN FREUNDEN.

Worte, die der Dichter spricht,
Treu, in heimischen Bezirken
Wirken gleich, doch weiss er nicht
Ob sie in die Ferne wirken.

Britten! habt sie aufgefasst:
'Thätigen Sinn, das Thun gezügelt;
Stetig Streben ohne Hast;'
Und so wollt Ihrs denn besiegelt!

"Weimar, d. 28ten August 1831. GOETHE."'

(*Fraser's Magazine*, xxii. 447.)

And thus, as it chanced, was the poet's *last* birthday celebrated by an outward ceremony of a peculiar kind; wherein too, it is to be hoped, might lie some inward meaning and sincerity.

has witnessed since the Introduction of the Christian Religion; to which old chaotic Era, of world-confusion and world-*re*fusion, of blackest darkness, succeeded by a dawn of light and nobler 'dayspring from on high,' this wondrous Era of ours is, indeed, oftenest likened. To the faithful heart let no era be a desperate one! It is ever the nature of Darkness to be followed by a new nobler Light; nay to produce such. The woes and contradictions of an Atheistic time; of a world sunk in wickedness and baseness and unbelief, wherein also physical wretchedness, the disorganisation and broken-heartedness of whole classes struggling in ignorance and pain will not fail: all this, the view of all this, falls like a Sphinx-question on every new-born earnest heart, a life-and-death entanglement for every earnest heart to deliver itself from, and the world from. Of Wisdom cometh Strength: only when there is 'no vision' do the people perish. But, by natural vicissitude, the age of *Persiflage* goes out, and that of earnest unconquerable Endeavour must come in: for the ashes of the old fire will not warm men anew; the new generation is too desolate to indulge in mockery,—unless, perhaps, in bitter suicidal mockery of itself! Thus after Voltaires enough have laughed and sniffed at what is false, appear some Turgots to ask what is true. Woe to the land where, in these seasons, no prophet arises; but only censors, satirists and embittered desperadoes, to make the evil worse; at best but to accelerate a consummation, which in accelerating they have aggravated! Old Europe had its Tacitus and Juvenal; but these availed not. New Europe too has had its Mirabeaus, and Byrons, and Napoleons, and innumerable red-flaming meteors, shaking pestilence from their hair; and earthquakes and deluges, and Chaos come again; but the clear Star, day's harbinger (*Phosphoros*, the bringer of *light*), had not yet been recognised.

That in Goethe there lay Force to educe reconcilement out of such contradiction as man is now born into, marks him as the Strong One of his time; the true *Earl*, though now with quite other weapons than those old steel *Jarls* were used to! Such reconcilement of contradictions, indeed, is the task of every man: the weakest reconciles somewhat; reduces old chaotic elements into new higher order; ever, according to faculty and endeavour, brings good out of evil. Consider now

what faculty and endeavour must belong to the highest of such tasks, which virtually includes all others whatsoever! The thing that was given this man to reconcile (to begin reconciling and teach us how to reconcile), was the inward spiritual chaos; the centre of all other confusions, outward and inward: he was to close the Abyss out of which such manifold destruction, moral, intellectual, social, was proceeding.

The greatness of his Endowment, manifested in such a work, has long been plain to all men. That it belongs to the highest class of human endowments, entitling the wearer thereof, who so nobly used it, to the appellation, in its strictest sense, of Great Man,—is also becoming plain. A giant strength of Character is to be traced here; mild and kindly and calm, even as strength ever is. In the midst of so much spasmodic Byronism, bellowing till its windpipe is cracked, how very different looks *this* symptom of strength: 'He appeared to aim at 'pushing away from him everything that did not hang upon 'his individual will.' 'In his own imperturbable firmness of 'character, he had grown into the habit of never contradicting 'any one. On the contrary, he listened with a friendly air to every 'one's opinion, and would himself elucidate and strengthen it 'by instances and reasons of his own. All who did not know 'him fancied that he thought as they did; for he was possessed 'of a preponderating intellect, and could transport himself 'into the mental state of any man, and imitate his manner of 'conceiving.'[8] Beloved brethren, who wish to be strong! Had not the man, who could take this smooth method of it, more strength in him than any teeth-grinding, glass-eyed 'lone Caloyer' you have yet fallen-in with? Consider your ways; consider, first, whether you cannot do with being *weak!* If the answer still prove negative, consider, secondly, what strength actually is, and where you are to try for it. A certain strong man, of former time, fought stoutly at Lepanto; worked stoutly as Algerine slave; stoutly delivered himself from such working; with stout cheerfulness endured famine and nakedness and the world's ingratitude; and, sitting in jail, with the one arm left him, wrote our joyfulest, and all but our deepest, modern book, and named it *Don Quixote:* this was a genuine strong man.

[8] *Wilhelm Meister*, book vi.

A strong man, of recent time, fights little for any good cause anywhere; works weakly as an English lord; weakly delivers himself from such working; with weak despondency endures the cackling of plucked geese at St. James's; and, sitting in sunny Italy, in his coach-and-four, at a distance of two thousand miles from them, writes, over many reams of paper, the following sentence, with variations: *Saw ever the world one greater or unhappier?* This was a sham strong man. Choose ye.—

Of Goethe's spiritual Endowment, looked at on the Intellectual side, we have (as indeed lies in the nature of things, for moral and intellectual are fundamentally one and the same) to pronounce a similiar opinion; that it is great among the very greatest. As the first gift of all, may be discerned here utmost Clearness, all-piercing faculty of Vision; whereto, as we ever find it, all other gifts are superadded; nay, properly they are but other forms of the same gift. A nobler power of insight than this of Goethe you in vain look for, since Shakspeare passed away. In fact, there is much every way, here in particular, that these two minds have in common. Shakspeare too does not look *at* a thing, but into it, through it; so that he constructively comprehends it, can take it asunder, and put it together again; the thing melts, as it were, into light under his eye, and anew *creates* itself before him. That is to say, he is a Thinker in the highest of all senses: he is a Poet. For Goethe, as for Shakspeare, the world lies all translucent, all *fusible* we might call it, encircled with WONDER; the Natural in reality the Supernatural, for to the seer's eyes both become one. What are the *Hamlets* and *Tempests*, the *Fausts* and *Mignons*, but glimpses accorded us into this translucent, wonder-encircled world; revelations of the mystery of all mysteries, Man's Life as it actually is?

Under other secondary aspects the poetical faculty of the two will still be found cognate. Goethe is full of *figurativeness;* this grand light-giving Intellect, as all such are, is an imaginative one,—and in a quite other sense than most of our unhappy Imaginatives will imagine. Gall the Craniologist declared him to be a born *Volksredner* (popular orator), both by the figure of his brow, and what was still more decisive, because 'he could not speak but a figure came.' Gall saw what was high as his own nose reached,

High as the nose doth reach, all clear!
What higher lies, they ask: Is it here?

A far different figurativeness was this of Goethe than popular oratory has work for. In figures of the popular-oratory kind, Goethe, throughout his Writings at least, is nowise the most copious man known to us, though on a stricter scrutiny we may find him the richest. Of your ready-made, coloured-paper metaphors, such as can be sewed or plastered on the surface, by way of giving an ornamental finish to the rag-web already woven, we speak not; there is not one such to be discovered in all his Works. But even in the use of genuine metaphors, which are not haberdashery ornament, but the genuine new vesture of new thoughts, he yields to lower men (for example to Jean Paul); that is to say, in fact, he is more master of the *common* language, and can oftener make *it* serve him. Goethe's figurativeness lies in the very centre of his being; manifests itself as the constructing of the inward elements of a thought, as the *vital* embodiment of it: such figures as those of Goethe you will look for through all modern literature, and except here and there in Shakspeare, nowhere find a trace of. Again, it is the same faculty in higher exercise, that enables the poet to construct a Character. Here too Shakspeare and Goethe, unlike innumerable others, are *vital;* their construction begins at the *heart* and flows outward as the life-streams do; fashioning the *surface*, as it were, spontaneously. Those Macbeths and Falstaffs, accordingly, these Fausts and Philinas have a verisimilitude and life that separates them from all other fictions of late ages. All others, in comparison, have more or less the nature of hollow vizards, constructed from without inwards, painted *like*, and deceptively put in motion. Many years ago on finishing our first perusal of *Wilhelm Meister*, with a very mixed sentiment in other respects, we could not but feel that here lay more insight into the elements of human nature, and a more poetically perfect combining of these, than in all the other fictitious literature of our generation.

Neither, as an additional similarity (for the great is ever like itself), let the majestic Calmness of both be omitted; their perfect tolerance for all men and all things. This too proceeds from the same source, perfect clearness of vision: he who com-

prehends an object cannot hate it, has already begun to love it. In respect of style, no less than of character, this calmness and graceful smooth-flowing softness is again characteristic of both; though in Goethe the quality is more complete, having been matured by far more assiduous study. Goethe's style is perhaps to be reckoned the most excellent that our modern world, in any language, can exhibit. 'Even to a foreigner,' says one, 'it is full of character and secondary meanings; po-'lished, yet vernacular and cordial, it sounds like the dialect of 'wise, antique-minded, true-hearted men: in poetry, brief, sharp, 'simple and expressive: in prose, perhaps still more pleasing; 'for it is at once concise and full, rich, clear, unpretending 'and melodious; and the sense, not presented in alternating 'flashes, piece after piece revealed and withdrawn, rises before 'us as in continuous dawning, and stands at last simultaneously 'complete, and bathed in the mellowest and ruddiest sunshine. 'It brings to mind what the prose of Hooker, Bacon, Milton, 'Browne, would have been, had they written under the good 'without the bad influences of that French precision, which 'has polished and attenuated, trimmed and impoverished all 'modern languages; made our meaning clear, and too often 'shallow as well as clear.'

Finally, as Shakspeare is to be considered as the greater nature of the two, so on the other hand we must admit him to have been the less cultivated, and much the more careless. What Shakspeare *could* have done we nowhere discover. A careless mortal, open to the Universe and its influences, not caring strenuously to open himself; who, Prometheus-like, will scale Heaven (if it so must be), and is satisfied if he therewith pay the rent of his London Playhouse; who, had the Warwickshire Justice let him hunt deer unmolested, might, for many years more, have lived quiet on the green earth without such aerial journeys: an unparalleled mortal. In the great Goethe, again, we see a man through life at his utmost strain; a man who, as he says himself, 'struggled toughly;' laid hold of all things, under all aspects, scientific or poetic; engaged passionately with the deepest interests of man's existence, in the most complex age of man's history. What Shakspeare's thoughts on 'God, Nature, Art,' would have been, especially had he lived to number fourscore years, were curious to know: Goethe's,

delivered in many-toned melody, as the apocalypse of our era, are here for us to know.

Such was the noble talent intrusted to this man; such the noble employment he made thereof. We can call him, once more, 'a clear and universal man;' we can say that, in his universality, as thinker, as singer, as worker, he lived a life of antique nobleness under these new conditions; and, in so living, is alone in all Europe; the foremost, whom others are to learn from and follow. In which great act, or rather great sum-total of many acts, who shall compute what treasure of new strengthening, of faith become hope and vision, lies secured for all! The question, Can man still live in devoutness, yet without blindness or contraction; in unconquerable steadfastness for the right, yet without tumultuous exasperation against the wrong; as an antique worthy, yet with the expansion and increased endowment of a modern? is no longer a question, but has become a certainty, and ocularly-visible fact.

We have looked at Goethe, as we engaged to do, 'on *this* side,' and with the eyes of 'this generation;' that is to say, chiefly as a world-changer, and benignant spiritual revolutionist: for in our present so astonishing condition of 'progress of the species,' such is the category under which we must try all things, wisdom itself. And, indeed, under this aspect too, Goethe's Life and Works are doubtless of incalculable value, and worthy our most earnest study: for his Spiritual History is, as it were, the ideal emblem of all true men's in these days; the goal of Manhood, which he attained, we too in our degree have to aim at; let us mark well the road he fashioned for himself, and in the dim weltering chaos rejoice to find a paved way.

Here, moreover, another word of explanation is perhaps worth adding. We mean, in regard to the controversy agitated (as about many things pertaining to Goethe) about his Political creed and practice, Whether he was Ministerial or in Opposition? Let the political admirer of Goethe be at ease: Goethe was both, and also neither! The 'rotten whitewashed (*gebrechliche übertünchte*) condition of society' was plainer to few eyes than to his, sadder to few hearts than to his. Listen to the Epigrammatist at Venice:

> To this stithy I liken the land, the hammer its ruler,
> And the people that plate, beaten between them that writhes:

> Woe to the plate, when nothing but wilful bruises on bruises
> Hit it at random; and made, cometh no Kettle to view!

But, alas, what is to be done?

> No Apostle-of-Liberty much to my heart ever found I;
> License, each for himself, this was at bottom their want.
> Liberator of many! first dare to be Servant of many:
> What a business is that, wouldst thou know it, go try!

Let the following also be recommended to all inordinate worshippers of Septennials, Triennials, Elective Franchise, and the Shameful Parts of the Constitution; and let each be a little tolerant of his neighbour's 'festoon,' and rejoice that he has himself found out *Freedom*,—a thing much wanted:

> Walls I can see tumbled down, walls I see also a-building;
> Here sit prisoners, there likewise do prisoners sit:
> Is the world, then, itself a huge prison? Free only the madman,
> His chains knitting still up into some graceful festoon?

So that, for the Poet, what remains but to leave Conservative and Destructive pulling one another's locks and ears off, as they will and can (the ulterior issue being long since indubitable enough); and, for his own part, strive day and night to forward the small suffering remnant of *Productives*; of those who, in true manful endeavour, were it under despotism or under sansculottism, create somewhat, with whom alone, in the end, does the hope of the world lie? Go thou and do likewise! Art thou *called* to politics, work therein, as this man would have done, like a real and not an imaginary workman. Understand well, meanwhile, that to no man is his political constitution 'a life, but only a house wherein his life is led:' and hast thou a nobler task than such *house*-pargeting and smoke-doctoring, and pulling down of ancient rotten rat-inhabited walls, leave such to the proper craftsman; honour the higher Artist, and good-humouredly say with him:

> All this is neither my coat nor my cake,
> Why fill my hand with other men's charges?
> The fishes swim at ease in the lake,
> And take no thought of the barges.

Goethe's political practice, or rather no-practice, except that of self-defence, is a part of his conduct quite inseparably coherent

with the rest; a thing we could recommend to universal study, that the spirit of it might be understood by all men, and by all men imitated.

Nevertheless it is nowise alone on this revolutionary or 'progress-of-the-species' side that Goethe has significance; his Life and Work is no painted show but a solid reality, and may be looked at with profit on all sides, from all imaginable points of view. Perennial, as a possession for ever, Goethe's History and Writings abide there; a thousand-voiced 'Melody of Wisdom,' which he that has ears may hear. What the experience of the most complexly-situated, deep-searching, everyway *far-experienced* man has yielded him of insight, lies written for all men here. He who was of compass to know and feel more than any other man, this is the record of his knowledge and feeling. 'The deepest heart, the highest head to scan,' was not beyond his faculty; thus, then, did he scan and interpret: let many generations listen, according to their want; let the generation which has no need of listening, and nothing new to learn there, esteem itself a happy one.

To us, meanwhile, to all that wander in darkness and seek light, as the one thing needful, be this possession reckoned among our choicest blessings and distinctions. *Colite talem virum;* learn of him, imitate, emulate him! So did *he* catch the Music of the Universe, and unfold it into clearness, and in authentic celestial tones bring it home to the hearts of men, from amid that soul-confusing Babylonish hubbub of this our new Tower-of-Babel era! For now too, as in that old time, had men said to themselves: Come, let us build a tower which shall reach to heaven; and by our steam-engines, and logic-engines, and skilful mechanism and manipulation, vanquish not only Physical Nature, but the divine Spirit of Nature, and scale the empyrean itself. Wherefore they must needs again be stricken with confusion of tongues (or of printing-presses); and *dispersed,*—to other work; wherein also, let us hope, their hammers and trowels shall better avail them.—

Of Goethe, with a feeling such as can be due to no other man, we now take farewell. *Vixit, vivit.*

CORN-LAW RHYMES.[1]

[1832.]

SMELFUNGUS REDIVIVUS, throwing down his critical assaying balance some years ago, and taking leave of the Belles-Lettres function, expressed himself in this abrupt way: 'The end 'having come, it is fit that we end. Poetry having ceased to 'be read, or published, or written, how can it continue to be 'reviewed? With your Lake Schools, and Border-Thief 'Schools, and Cockney and Satanic Schools, there has been 'enough to do; and now, all these Schools having burnt or 'smouldered themselves out, and left nothing but a wide-spread 'wreck of ashes, dust and cinders,—or perhaps dying embers, 'kicked to and fro under the feet of innumerable women and 'children in the Magazines, and at best blown here and there 'into transient sputters, with vapour enough, so as to form 'what you might name a boundless Green-sick, or New-Senti-'mental, or Sleep-Awake School,—what remains but to adjust 'ourselves to circumstances? Urge me not,' continues the able Editor, suddenly changing his figure, 'with considerations that 'Poetry, as the inward voice of Life, must be perennial, only 'dead in one form to become alive in another; that this still 'abundant deluge of Metre, seeing there must needs be 'fractions of Poetry floating scattered in it, ought still to be 'net-fished, at all events surveyed and taken note of: the sur-'vey of English Metre, at this epoch, perhaps transcends the 'human faculties; to hire-out the reading of it, by estimate, at 'a remunerative rate per page, would, in few Quarters, reduce

[1] EDINBURGH REVIEW, No. 110.—1. *Corn-Law Rhymes.* Third Edition. 8vo. London, 1831.

2. *Love; a Poem.* By the Author of "Corn-Law Rhymes." Third Edition. 8vo. London, 1831.

3. *The Village Patriarch; a Poem.* By the Author of "Corn-Law Rhymes." 12mo. London, 1831.

'the cash-box of any extant Review to the verge of insol-
'vency.'

What our distinguished contemporary has said remains said. Far be it from us to censure or counsel any able Editor; to draw aside the Editorial veil, and, officiously prying into his interior mysteries, impugn the laws he walks by! For Editors, as for others, there are times of perplexity, wherein the cunning of the wisest will scantily suffice his own wants, to say nothing of his neighbour's.

To us, on our side, meanwhile, it remains clear that Poetry, or were it but Metre, should nowise be altogether neglected. Surely it is the Reviewer's trade to sit watching not only the tillage, crop-rotation, marketings and good or evil husbandry of the Economic Earth, but also the weather-symptoms of the Literary Heaven, on which those former so much depend: if any promising or threatening meteoric phenomenon make its appearance, and he proclaim not tidings thereof, it is at his peril. Farther, be it considered how, in this singular poetic epoch, a small matter constitutes a novelty. If the whole welkin hang overcast in drizzly dinginess, the feeblest light-gleam, or speck of blue, cannot pass unheeded.

The Works of this Corn-Law Rhymer we might liken rather to some little fraction of a rainbow: hues of joy and harmony, painted out of troublous tears. No round full bow, indeed; gloriously spanning the heavens; shone on by the full sun; and, with seven-striped, gold-crimson border (as is in some sort the office of Poetry) dividing Black from Brilliant: not such; alas, still far from it! Yet, in very truth, a little prismatic blush, glowing genuine among the wet clouds; which proceeds, if you will, from a sun cloud-hidden, yet indicates that a sun does shine, and above those vapours, a whole azure vault and celestial firmament stretch serene.

Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that here we have once more got sight of a Book calling itself Poetry, yet which actually is a kind of Book, and no empty pasteboard Case, and simulacrum or 'ghost-defunct' of a Book, such as is too often palmed on the world, and handed over Booksellers' counters, with a demand of real money for it, as if it too were a reality. The speaker here is of that singular class who have something to say; whereby, though delivering himself in verse,

and in these days, he does not deliver himself wholly in jargon, but articulately, and with a certain degree of meaning, that has been *believed*, and therefore is again believable.

To some the wonder and interest will be heightened by another circumstance: that the speaker in question is not school-learned, or even furnished with pecuniary capital; is, indeed, a quite unmoneyed, russet-coated speaker; nothing or little other than a Sheffield worker in brass and iron, who describes himself as 'one of the lower, little removed above the lowest class.' Be of what class he may, the man is provided, as we can perceive, with a rational god-created soul; which too has fashioned itself into some clearness, some self-subsistence, and can actually see and know with its own organs; and in rugged substantial English, nay with tones of poetic melody, utter forth what it has seen.

It used to be said that lions do not paint, that poor men do not write; but the case is altering now. Here is a voice coming from the deep Cyclopean forges, where Labour, in real soot and sweat, beats with his thousand hammers 'the red son of the furnace;' doing personal battle with Necessity, and her dark brute Powers, to make them reasonable and serviceable; an intelligible voice from the hitherto Mute and Irrational, to tell us at first-hand how it is with him, what in very deed is the theorem of the world and of himself, which he, in those dim depths of his, in that wearied head of his, has put together. To which voice, in several respects significant enough, let good ear be given.

Here too be it premised, that nowise under the category of 'Uneducated Poets,' or in any fashion of dilettante patronage, can our Sheffield friend be produced. His position is unsuitable for that: so is ours. Genius, which the French lady declared to be of no sex, is much more certainly of no rank; neither when 'the spark of Nature's fire' has been imparted, should Education take high airs in her artificial light,—which is too often but phosphorescence and putrescence. In fact, it now begins to be suspected here and there, that this same aristocratic recognition, which looks down with an obliging smile from its throne, of bound Volumes and gold Ingots, and admits that it is wonderfully well for one of the uneducated classes, may be getting out of place. There are unhappy times in the

world's history, when he that is the least educated will chiefly have to say that he is the least perverted; and with the multitude of false eye-glasses, convex, concave, green, even yellow, has not lost the natural use of his eyes. For a generation that reads Cobbett's Prose, and Burns's Poetry, it need be no miracle that here also is a man who can handle both pen and hammer like a man.

Nevertheless, this serene-highness attitude and temper is so frequent, perhaps it were good to turn the tables for a moment, and see what look it has under that reverse aspect. How were it if we surmised, that for a man gifted with natural vigour, with a man's character to be developed in him, more especially if in the way of Literature, as Thinker and Writer, it is actually, in these strange days, no special misfortune to be trained up among the Uneducated classes, and not among the Educated; but rather of two misfortunes the smaller?

For all men, doubtless, obstructions abound; spiritual growth must be hampered and stunted, and has to struggle through with difficulty, if it do not wholly stop. We may grant, too, that, for a mediocre character, the continual training and tutoring, from language-masters, dancing-masters, posture-masters of all sorts, hired and volunteer, which a high rank in any time and country assures, there will be produced a certain superiority, or at worst, air of superiority, over the corresponding mediocre character of low rank: thus we perceive the vulgar Do-nothing, as contrasted with the vulgar Drudge, is in general a much prettier man; with a wider, perhaps clearer outlook into the distance; in innumerable superficial matters, however it may be when we go deeper, he has a manifest advantage. But with the man of uncommon character, again, in whom a germ of irrepressible Force has been implanted, and *will* unfold itself into some sort of freedom, altogether the reverse may hold. For such germs too, there is, undoubtedly enough, a proper soil where they will grow best, and an improper one where they will grow worst. True also, where there is a will, there is a way; where a genius has been given, a possibility, a certainty of its growing is also given. Yet often it seems as if the injudicious gardening and manuring were worse than none at all; and killed what the inclemencies of blind chance would have spared. We find accordingly that few Fredericks

or Napoleons, indeed none since the Great Alexander, who unfortunately drank himself to death too soon for proving what lay in him, were nursed up with an eye to their vocation: mostly with an eye quite the other way, in the midst of isolation and pain, destitution and contradiction. Nay in our own times, have we not seen two men of genius, a Byron and a Burns; they both, by mandate of Nature, struggle and must struggle towards clear Manhood, stormfully enough, for the space of six-and-thirty years; yet only the gifted Ploughman can partially prevail therein: the gifted Peer must toil and strive, and shoot-out in wild efforts, yet die at last in Boyhood, with the promise of his Manhood still but announcing itself in the distance. Truly, as was once written, 'it is only the arti-'choke that will not grow except in gardens; the acorn is cast 'carelessly abroad into the wilderness, yet on the wild soil it 'nourishes itself, and rises to be an oak.' All woodmen, moreover, will tell you that fat manure is the ruin of your oak; likewise that the thinner and wilder your soil, the tougher, more iron-textured is your timber,—though unhappily also the smaller. So too with the spirits of men: they become pure from their errors by suffering for them; he who has battled, were it only with Poverty and hard toil, will be found stronger, more expert, than he who could stay at home from the battle, concealed among the Provision-wagons, or even not unwatchfully 'abiding by the stuff.' In which sense, an observer, not without experience of our time, has said: Had I a man of clearly developed character (clear, sincere within its limits), of insight, courage and real applicable force of head and of heart, to search for; and not a man of luxuriously distorted character, with haughtiness for courage, and for insight and applicable force, speculation and plausible show of force,—it were rather among the lower than among the higher classes that I should look for him.

A hard saying, indeed, seems this same: that he, whose other wants were all beforehand supplied; to whose capabilities no problem was presented except even this, How to cultivate them to best advantage, should attain less real culture than he whose first grand problem and obligation was nowise spiritual culture, but hard labour for his daily bread! Sad enough must the perversion be, where preparations of such

magnitude issue in abortion; and so sumptuous an Art with all its appliances can accomplish nothing, not so much as necessitous Nature would of herself have supplied! Nevertheless, so pregnant is Life with evil as with good; to such height in an age rich, plethorically overgrown with means, can means be accumulated in the wrong place, and immeasurably aggravate wrong tendencies, instead of righting them, this sad and strange result may actually turn out to have been realised.

But what, after all, is meant by *uneducated*, in a time when Books have come into the world; come to be household furniture in every habitation of the civilised world? In the poorest cottage are Books; is one Book, wherein for several thousands of years the spirit of man has found light, and nourishment, and an interpreting response to whatever is Deepest in him; wherein still, to this day, for the eye that will look well, the Mystery of Existence reflects itself, if not resolved, yet revealed, and prophetically emblemed; if not to the satisfying of the outward sense, yet to the opening of the inward sense, which is the far grander result. 'In Books lie the creative phœnix-ashes of the whole Past.' All that men have devised, discovered, done, felt or imagined, lies recorded in Books; wherein whoso has learned the mystery of spelling printed letters may find it, and appropriate it.

Nay, what indeed is all this? As if it were by universities and libraries and lecture-rooms, that man's Education, what we can call Education, were accomplished; solely, or mainly, by instilling the dead letter and record of other men's Force, that the living Force of a new man were to be awakened, enkindled and purified into victorious clearness! Foolish Pedant, that sittest there compassionately descanting on the Learning of Shakspeare! Shakspeare had penetrated into innumerable things; far into Nature with her divine Splendours and infernal Terrors, her Ariel Melodies, and mystic mandragora Moans; far into man's workings with Nature, into man's Art and Artifice; Shakspeare knew (*kenned*, which in those days still partially meant *can-ned*) innumerable things; what men are, and what the world is, and how and what men aim at there, from the Dame Quickly of modern Eastcheap to the Cæsar of ancient Rome, over many countries, over many centuries: of all this he had the clearest understanding and constructive comprehension;

all this was his Learning and Insight; what now is thine? Insight into none of those things; perhaps, strictly considered, into no thing whatever: solely into thy own sheepskin diplomas, fat academic honours, into vocables and alphabetic letters, and but a little way into these!—The grand result of schooling is a mind with just vision to discern, with free force to do: the grand schoolmaster is Practice.

And now, when *kenning* and *can-ning* have become two altogether different words; and this, the first principle of human culture, the foundation-stone of all but false imaginary culture, that men must, before every other thing, be trained to *do* somewhat, has been, for some generations, laid quietly on the shelf, with such result as we see,—consider what advantage those same uneducated Working classes have over the educated Unworking classes, in one particular; herein, namely, that they must *work*. To work! What incalculable sources of cultivation lie in that process, in that attempt; how it lays hold of the whole man, not of a small theoretical calculating fraction of him, but of the whole practical, doing and daring and enduring man; thereby to awaken dormant faculties, root-out old errors, at every step! He that has done nothing has known nothing. Vain is it to sit scheming and plausibly discoursing: up and be doing! If thy knowledge be real, put it forth from thee: grapple with real Nature; try thy theories there, and see how they hold out. *Do* one thing, for the first time in thy life do a thing; a new light will rise to thee on the doing of all things whatsoever. Truly, a boundless significance lies in work; whereby the humblest craftsman comes to attain much, which is of indispensable use, but which he who is of no craft, were he never so high, runs the risk of missing. Once turn to Practice, Error and Truth will no longer consort together: the result of Error involves you in the square-root of a negative quantity; try to *extract* that, to extract any earthly substance or sustenance from that! The honourable Member can discover that 'there is a reaction,' and believe it, and wearisomely reason on it, in spite of all men, while he so pleases, for still his wine and his oil will not fail him: but the sooty Brazier, who discovered that brass was green-cheese, has to act on his discovery; finds therefore, that, singular as it may seem, brass cannot be masticated for dinner, green-cheese will not beat into fire-proof dishes; that

such discovery, therefore, has no legs to stand on, and must even be let fall. Now, take this principle of difference through the entire lives of two men, and calculate what it will amount to! Necessity, moreover, which we here see as the mother of Accuracy, is well known as the mother of Invention. He who wants everything must know many things, do many things, to procure even a few: different enough with him, whose indispensable knowledge is this only, that a finger will pull the bell!

So that, for all men who live, we may conclude, this Life of Man is a school, wherein the naturally foolish will continue foolish though you bray him in a mortar, but the naturally wise will gather wisdom under every disadvantage. What, meanwhile, must be the condition of an Era, when the highest advantages there become perverted into drawbacks; when, if you take two men of genius, and put the one between the handles of a plough, and mount the other between the painted coronets of a coach-and-four, and bid them both move along, the former shall arrive a Burns, the latter a Byron: two men of talent, and put the one into a Printer's chapel, full of lamp-black, tyrannous usage, hard toil, and the other into Oxford universities, with lexicons and libraries, and hired expositors and sumptuous endowments, the former shall come out a Dr. Franklin, the latter a Dr. Parr!—

However, we are not here to write an Essay on Education, or sing *misereres* over a 'world in its dotage;' but simply to say that our Corn-Law Rhymer, educated or uneducated as Nature and Art have made him, asks not the smallest patronage or compassion for his rhymes, professes not the smallest contrition for them. Nowise in such attitude does he present himself; not supplicatory, deprecatory, but sturdy, defiant, almost menacing. Wherefore, indeed, should he supplicate or deprecate? It is out of the abundance of the heart that he has spoken: praise or blame cannot make it truer or falser than it already is. By the grace of God this man is sufficient for himself; by his skill in metallurgy can beat out a toilsome but a manful living, go how it may; has arrived too at that singular audacity of believing what he knows, and acting on it, or writing on it, or thinking on it, without leave asked of any one: there shall he stand, and work, with head and with hand, for

himself and the world; blown about by no wind of doctrine; frightened at no Reviewer's shadow; having, in his time, looked substances enough in the face, and remained unfrightened.

What is left, therefore, but to take what he brings, and as he brings it? Let us be thankful, were it only for the day of small things. Something it is that we have lived to welcome once more a sweet Singer wearing the likeness of a Man. In humble guise, it is true, and of stature more or less marred in its development; yet not without a genial robustness, strength and valour built on honesty and love; on the whole, a genuine man, with somewhat of the eye and speech and bearing that beseems a man. To whom all other genuine men, how different soever in subordinate particulars, can gladly hold out the right hand of fellowship.

The great excellence of our Rhymer, be it understood, then, we take to consist even in this, often hinted at already, that he is *genuine*. Here is an earnest truth-speaking man; no theoriser, sentimentaliser, but a practical man of work and endeavour, man of sufferance and endurance. The thing that he speaks is not a hearsay, but a thing which he has himself known, and by experience become assured of. He has used his eyes for seeing; uses his tongue for declaring what he has seen. His voice, therefore, among the many noises of our Planet, will deserve its place better than the most; will be well worth some attention. Whom else should we attend to but such? The man who speaks with some half shadow of a Belief, and supposes, and inclines to think; and considers not with undivided soul, what is true, but only what is plausible, and will find audience and recompense: do we not meet him at every street-turning, on all highways and byways; is he not stale, unprofitable, ineffectual, wholly grown a weariness of the flesh? So rare is his opposite in any rank of Literature or of Life, so very rare, that even in the lowest he is precious. The authentic insight and experience of any human soul, were it but insight and experience in hewing of wood and drawing of water, is real knowledge, a real possession and acquirement, how small soever: *palabra*, again, were it a supreme pontiff's, is wind merely, and nothing, or less than nothing. To a considerable degree, this man, we say, has worked himself loose from cant and conjectural halfness, idle pretences and hallucinations, into a condition of Sincerity. Wherein, per-

haps, as above argued, his hard social environment, and fortune to be 'a workman born,' which brought so many other retardations with it, may have forwarded and accelerated him.

That a man, Workman or Idleman, encompassed, as in these days, with persons in a state of willing or unwilling Insincerity, and necessitated, as man is, to learn whatever he does traditionally learn by *imitating* these, should nevertheless shake off Insincerity, and struggle out from that dim pestiferous marsh-atmosphere, into a clearer and purer height,—betokens in him a certain Originality; in which rare gift, force of all kinds is presupposed. To our Rhymer, accordingly, as hinted more than once, vision and determination have not been denied: a rugged, homegrown understanding is in him; whereby, in his own way, he has mastered this and that, and looked into various things, in general honestly and to purpose, sometimes deeply, piercingly and with a Seer's eye. Strong thoughts are not wanting, beautiful thoughts; strong and beautiful expressions of thought. As traceable, for instance, in this new illustration of an old argument, the mischief of Commercial Restrictions:

These, O ye quacks, these are your remedies:
Alms for the Rich, a bread-tax for the Poor!
Soul-purchased harvests on the indigent moor!—
Thus the winged victor of a hundred fights,
The warrior Ship, bows low her banner'd head,
When through her planks the seaborn reptile bites
Its deadly way;—and sinks in Ocean's bed,
Vanquish'd by worms. What then? The worms were fed.
Will not God smite thee black, thou whited wall?
Thy life is lawless, and thy law a lie,
Or Nature is a dream unnatural:
Look on the clouds, the streams, the earth, the sky;
Lo, all is interchange and harmony!
Where is the gorgeous pomp which, yester morn,
Curtained yon Orb with amber, fold on fold?
Behold it in the blue of Rivelin, borne
To feed the all-feeding sea! The molten gold
Is flowing pale in Loxley's waters cold,
To kindle into beauty tree and flower,
And wake to verdant life hill, vale and plain.
Cloud trades with river, and exchange is power:
But should the clouds, the streams, the winds disdain
Harmonious intercourse, nor dew nor rain

> Would forest-crown the mountains: airless day
> Would blast on Kinderscout the heathy glow;
> No purply green would meeken into gray
> O'er Don at eve; no sound of river's flow
> Disturb the Sepulchre of all below.

Nature and the doings of men have not passed by this man unheeded, like the endless cloud-rack in dull weather; or lightly heeded, like a theatric phantasmagoria; but earnestly inquired into, like a thing of reality; reverently loved and worshipped, as a thing with divine significance in its reality, glimpses of which divineness he has caught and laid to heart. For his vision, as was said, partakes of the genuinely Poetical; he is not a Rhymer and Speaker only, but, in some genuine sense, something of a Poet.

Farther, we must admit him, what indeed is already herein admitted, to be, if clear-sighted, also brave-hearted. A troublous element is his; a Life of painfulness, toil, insecurity, scarcity; yet he fronts it like a man; yields not to it, tames it into some subjection, some order; its wild fearful dinning and tumult, as of a devouring Chaos, becomes a sort of wild war-music for him; wherein too are passages of beauty, of melodious melting softness, of lightness and briskness, even of joy. The stout heart is also a warm and kind one; Affection dwells with Danger, all the holier and the lovelier for such stern environment. A working man is this; yet, as we said, a man: in his sort, a courageous, much-loving, faithfully enduring and endeavouring man.

What such a one, so gifted and so placed, shall say to a Time like ours; how he will fashion himself into peace, or war, or armed neutrality, with the world and his fellow-men; and work out his course in joy and grief, in victory and defeat, is a question worth asking: which in these three little Volumes partly receives answer. He has turned, as all thinkers up to a very high and rare order in these days must do, into Politics; is a Reformer, at least a stern Complainer, Radical to the core: his poetic melody takes an elegiaco-tragical character; much of him is converted into hostility, and grim, hardly-suppressed indignation, such as right long denied, hope long deferred, may awaken in the kindliest heart. Not yet as a rebel against anything does he stand; but as a free man, and the spokesman of

free men, not far from rebelling against much; with sorrowful appealing dew, yet also with incipient lightning, in his eyes; whom it were not desirable to provoke into rebellion. He says in Vulcanic dialect, his feelings have been *hammered* till they are *cold-short;* so they will no longer bend; 'they snap, and fly off,'—in the face of the hammerer. Not unnatural, though lamentable! Nevertheless, under all disguises of the Radical, the Poet is still recognisable: a certain music breathes through all dissonances, as the prophecy and ground-tone of returning harmony; the man, as we said, is of a poetical nature.

To his Political Philosophy there is perhaps no great importance attachable. He feels, as all men that live must do, the disorganisation, and hard-grinding, unequal pressure of our Social Affairs; but sees into it only a very little farther than far inferior men do. The frightful condition of a Time, when public and private Principle, as the word was once understood, having gone out of sight, and Self-interest being left to plot, and struggle, and scramble, as it could and would, Difficulties had accumulated till they were no longer to be borne, and the spirit that should have fronted and conquered them seemed to have forsaken the world;—when the Rich, as the utmost they could resolve on, had ceased to govern, and the Poor, in their fast-accumulating numbers, and ever-widening complexities, had ceased to be able to do without governing; and now the plan of 'Competition' and '*Laissez-faire*' was, on every side, approaching its consummation; and each, bound-up in the circle of his own wants and perils, stood grimly distrustful of his neighbour, and the distracted Common-weal was a Common-woe, and to all men it became apparent that the end was drawing nigh:—all this black aspect of Ruin and Decay, visible enough, experimentally known to our Sheffield friend, he calls by the name of 'Corn-Law,' and expects to be in good part delivered from, were the accursed Bread-tax repealed.

In this system of political Doctrine, even as here so emphatically set forth, there is not much of novelty. Radicals we have many; loud enough on this and other grievances; the removal of which is to be the one thing needful. The deep, wide flood of bitterness, and hope becoming hopeless, lies acrid, corrosive in every bosom; and flows fiercely enough through any orifice Accident may open: through Law-Reform, Legislative

Reform, Poor-Laws, want of Poor-Laws, Tithes, Game-Laws, or, as we see here, Corn-Laws. Whereby indeed only this becomes clear, that a deep wide flood of evil does exist and corrode; from which, in all ways, blindly and seeingly, men seek deliverance, and cannot rest till they find it; least of all till they know what part and proportion of it is to *be* found. But with us foolish sons of Adam this is ever the way: some evil that lies nearest us, be it a chronic sickness, or but a smoky chimney, is ever the acme and sum-total of all evil; the black hydra that shuts us out from a Promised Land; and so, in poor Mr. Shandy's fashion, must we 'shift from trouble to trouble, and 'from side to side; button-up one cause of vexation, and un-'button another.'

Thus for our keen-hearted singer, and sufferer, has the 'Bread-tax,' in itself a considerable but no immeasurable smoke-pillar, swoln out to be a world-embracing Darkness, that darkens and suffocates the whole earth, and has blotted out the heavenly stars. Into the merit of the Corn-Laws, which has often been discussed, in fit season, by competent hands, we do not enter here; least of all in the way of argument, in the way of blame, towards one who, if he read such merit with some emphasis 'on the scantier trenchers of his children,' may well be pardoned. That the 'Bread-tax,' with various other taxes, may ere long be altered and abrogated, and the Corn-Trade become as free as the poorest 'bread-taxed drudge' could wish it, or the richest 'satrap bread-tax-fed' could fear it, seems no extravagant hypothesis: would that the mad Time could, by such simple hellebore-dose, be healed! Alas for the diseases of a world lying in wickedness, in heart-sickness and atrophy, quite another alcahest is needed;—a long, painful course of medicine and regimen, surgery and physic, not yet specified or indicated in the Royal-College Books!

But if there is little novelty in our friend's Political Philosophy, there is some in his political Feeling and Poetry. The peculiarity of this Radical is, that with all his stormful destructiveness he combines a decided loyalty and faith. If he despise and trample under foot on the one hand, he exalts and reverences on the other; the 'landed pauper in his coach-and-four' rolls all the more glaringly, contrasted with the 'Rockinghams and Savilles' of the past, with the 'Lansdowns and

Fitzwilliams,' many a 'Wentworth's lord,' still 'a blessing' to the present. This man, indeed, has in him the root of all reverence,—a principle of Religion. He believes in a Godhead, not with the lips only, but apparently with the heart; who, as has been written, and often felt, 'reveals Himself in Parents, in all true Teachers and Rulers,'—as in false Teachers and Rulers quite Another may be revealed! Our Rhymer, it would seem, is no Methodist: far enough from it. He makes 'the Ranter,' in his hot-headed way, exclaim over

The Hundred Popes of England's Jesuistry;

and adds, by way of note, in his own person, some still stronger sayings: How 'this baneful corporation, dismal as its 'Reign of Terror is, and long-armed its Holy Inquisition, must 'condescend to learn and teach what is useful, or go where all 'nuisances go.' As little perhaps is he a Churchman; the 'Cadi-Dervish' seems nowise to his mind. Scarcely, however, if at all, does he show aversion to the Church as Church; or, among his many griefs, touch upon Tithes as one. But, in any case, the black colours of Life, even as here painted, and brooded over, do not hide from him that a God is the Author and Sustainer thereof; that God's world, if made a House of Imprisonment, can also be a House of Prayer; wherein for the weary and heavy-laden pity and hope are not altogether cut away.

It is chiefly in virtue of this inward temper of heart, with the clear disposition and adjustment which for all else results therefrom, that our Radical attains to be Poetical; that the harsh groanings, contentions, upbraidings, of one who unhappily has felt constrained to adopt such mode of utterance, become ennobled into something of music. If a land of bondage, this is still his Father's land, and the bondage endures not forever. As worshipper and believer, the captive can look with seeing eye: the aspect of the Infinite Universe still fills him with an Infinite feeling; his chains, were it but for moments, fall away; he soars free aloft, and the sunny regions of Poesy and Freedom gleam golden afar on the widened horizon. Gleamings we say, prophetic dawnings from those far regions, spring up for him; nay, beams of actual radiance. In his ruggedness, and dim contractedness (rather of place than of organ), he is

not without touches of a feeling and vision, which, even in the stricter sense, is to be named poetical.

One deeply poetical idea, above all others, seems to have taken hold of him: the idea of TIME. As was natural to a poetic soul, with few objects of Art in its environment, and driven inward, rather than invited outward, for occupation. This deep mystery of ever-flowing Time; bringing forth, and as the Ancients wisely fabled, devouring what it has brought forth; rushing on, *in* us, yet above us, all uncontrollable by us; and under it, dimly visible athwart it, the bottomless Eternal; —this is, indeed, what we may call the primary idea of Poetry; the first that introduces itself into the poetic mind. As here:

> The bee shall seek to settle on his hand,
> But from the vacant bench haste to the moor,
> Mourning the last of England's high-soul'd Poor,
> And bid the mountains weep for Enoch Wray.
> And for themselves,—albeit of things that last
> Unalter'd most; for they shall pass away
> Like Enoch, though their iron roots seem fast,
> Bound to the eternal future as the past:
> The Patriarch died; and they shall be no more!
> Yes, and the sailless worlds, which navigate
> The unutterable Deep that hath no shore,
> Will lose their starry splendour soon or late,
> Like tapers, quench'd by Him, whose will is fate!
> Yes, and the Angel of Eternity,
> Who numbers worlds and writes their names in light,
> One day, O Earth, will look in vain for thee,
> And start and stop in his unerring flight,
> And with his wings of sorrow and affright
> Veil his impassion'd brow and heavenly tears!

And not the first idea only, but the greatest, properly the parent of all others. For if it can rise in the remotest ages, in the rudest states of culture, wherever an 'inspired thinker' happens to exist, it connects itself still with all great things; with the highest results of new Philosophy, as of primeval Theology; and for the Poet, in particular, is as the life-element, wherein alone his conceptions can take poetic form and the whole world become miraculous and magical.

> We *are such stuff*
> As Dreams are made of: and our little life
> Is rounded with a Sleep!

Figure that, believe that, O Reader; then say whether the *Arabian Tales* seem wonderful!—'Rounded with a sleep (*mit 'Schlaf umgeben*)!' says Jean Paul; 'these three words created 'whole volumes in me.'

To turn now on our worthy Rhymer, who has brought us so much, and stingily insist on his errors and shortcomings, were no honest procedure. We should have the whole poetical encyclopædia to draw upon, and say commodiously, such and such an item is *not* here; of which encyclopædia the highest genius can fill but a portion. With much merit, far from common in his time, he is not without something of the faults of his time. We praised him for originality; yet is there a certain remainder of imitation in him; a tang of the Circulating Libraries; as in Sancho's wine, with its key and thong, there was a tang of iron and leather. To be reminded of Crabbe, with his truthful severity of style, in such a place, we cannot object; but what if there were a slight bravura dash of the fair tuneful Hemans? Still more, what have we to do with Byron, and his fierce vociferous mouthings, whether 'passionate,' or not passionate and only theatrical? King Cambyses' vein is, after all, but a worthless one; no vein for a wise man. Strength, if that be the thing aimed at, does not manifest itself in spasms, but in stout bearing of burdens. Our Author says, 'It is too bad to exalt into a hero the coxcomb who would 'have gone into hysterics if a tailor had laughed at him.' Walk not in his footsteps, then, we say, whether as hero or as singer; repent a little, for example, over somewhat in that fuliginous, blue-flaming, pitch-and-sulphur 'Dream of Enoch Wray,' and write the next otherwise.

We mean no imitation in a bad palpable sense; only that there is a tone of such occasionally audible, which ought to be removed;—of which, in any case, we make not much. Imitation is a leaning on something foreign; incompleteness of individual development, defect of free utterance. From the same source spring most of our Author's faults; in particular, his worst, which, after all, is intrinsically a defect of manner. He has little or no Humour. Without Humour of character he cannot well be; but it has not yet got to utterance. Thus, where he has mean things to deal with, he knows not how to deal with them; oftenest deals with them more or less meanly. In his vituperative prose Notes, he seems embarrassed; and

but ill hides his embarrassment, under an air of predetermined sarcasm, of knowing briskness, almost of vulgar pertness. He says, he cannot help it; he is poor, hard-worked, and 'soot is soot.' True, indeed; yet there is no connexion between Poverty and Discourtesy; which latter originates in Dulness alone. Courtesy is the due of man to man; not of suit-of-clothes to suit-of-clothes. He who could master so many things, and make even Corn-Laws rhyme, we require of him this farther thing: a bearing worthy of himself, and of the order he belongs to,—the highest and most ancient of all orders, that of Manhood. A pert snappishness is no manner for a brave man; and then the manner so soon influences the matter: a far worse result. Let him speak wise things, and speak them wisely; which latter may be done in many dialects, grave and gay, only in the snappish dialect seldom or never.

The truth is, as might have been expected, there is still much lying in him to be developed; the hope of which development it were rather sad to abandon. Why, for example, should not his view of the world, his knowledge of what is and has been in the world, indefinitely extend itself? Were he merely the 'uneducated Poet,' we should say, he had read largely; as he is not such, we say, Read still more, much more largely. Books enough there are in England, and of quite another weight and worth than that circulating-library sort; may be procured too, may be read, even by a hard-worked man; for what man (either in God's service or the Devil's, as himself chooses it) is not hard-worked? But here again, where there is a will there is a way. True, our friend is no longer in his teens; yet still, as would seem, in the vigour of his years: we hope too that his mind is not finally shut-in, but of the improvable and enlargeable sort. If Alfieri (also kept busy enough, with horse-breaking and what not) learned Greek after he was fifty, why is the Corn-Law Rhymer too old to learn?

However, be in the future what there may, our Rhymer has already done what was much more difficult, and better than reading printed books;—looked into the great prophetic manuscript Book of Existence, and read little passages there. Here, for example, is a sentence tolerably spelled:

> Where toils the Mill by ancient woods embraced,
> Hark, how the cold steel screams in hissing fire!
> Blind Enoch sees the Grinder's wheel no more,

Couch'd beneath rocks and forests, that admire
Their beauty in the waters, ere they roar
Dash'd in white foam the swift circumference o'er.
There draws the Grinder his laborious breath;
There coughing at his deadly trade he bends:
Born to die young, he fears nor man nor death;
Scorning the future, what he earns he spends;
Debauch and riot are his bosom friends.

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Behold his failings! Hath he virtues too?
He is no Pauper, blackguard though he be:
Full well he knows what minds combined can do,
Full well maintains his birthright: he is free,
And, frown for frown, outstares monopoly.
Yet Abraham and Elliot both in vain
Bid science on his cheek prolong the bloom:
He *will* not live! He seems in haste to gain
The undisturb'd asylum of the tomb,
And, old at two-and-thirty, meets his doom!

Or this, 'of Jem, the rogue avowed,'

Whose trade is Poaching! Honest Jem works not,
Begs not, but thrives by plundering beggars here.
Wise as a lord, and quite as good a shot,
He, like his betters, lives in hate and fear,
And feeds on partridge because bread is dear.
Sire of six sons apprenticed to the jail,
He prowls in arms, the Tory of the night;
With them he shares his battles and his ale,
With him they feel the majesty of might,
No Despot better knows that Power is Right.
Mark his unpaidish sneer, his lordly frown;
Hark how he calls the beadle and flunky liars;
See how magnificently he breaks down
His neighbour's fence, if so his will requires,
And how his struttle emulates the squire's!

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Jem rises with the Moon; but when she sinks,
Homeward with sack-like pockets, and quick heels,
Hungry as boroughmongering gowl, he slinks.
He reads not, writes not, thinks not, scarcely feels;
Steals all he gets; serves Hell with all he steals!

It is rustic, rude existence; barren moors, with the smoke of Forges rising over the waste expanse. Alas, no Arcadia;

but the actual dwelling-place of actual toil-grimed sons of Tubalcain : yet are there blossoms, and the wild natural fragrance of gorse and broom ; yet has the Craftsman pauses in his toil ; the Craftsman too has an inheritance in Earth, and even in Heaven :

> Light! All is not corrupt, for thou art pure,
> Unchanged and changeless. Though frail man is vile,
> Though look'st on him ; serene, sublime, secure,
> Yet, like thy Father, with a pitying smile.
> Even on this wintry day, as marble cold,
> Angels might quit their home to visit thee,
> And match their plumage with thy mantle roll'd
> Beneath God's Throne, o'er billows of a sea
> Whose isles are Worlds, whose bounds Infinity.
> Why, then, is Enoch absent from my side?
> I miss the rustle of his silver hair ;
> A guide no more, I seem to want a guide,
> While Enoch journeys to the house of prayer ;
> Ah, ne'er came Sabbath-day but he was there!
> Lo how, like him, erect and strong though gray,
> Yon village-tower time-touch'd to God appeals!
> And hark! the chimes of morning die away :
> Hark! to the heart the solemn sweetness steals,
> Like the heart's voice, unfelt by none who feels
> That God is Love, that Man is living Dust ;
> Unfelt by none whom ties of brotherhood
> Link to his kind ; by none who puts his trust
> In nought of Earth that hath survived the Flood,
> Save those mute charities, by which the good
> Strengthen poor worms, and serve their Maker best.
> Hail, Sabbath! Day of mercy, peace and rest!
> Thou o'er loud cities throw'st a noiseless spell ;
> The hammer there, the wheel, the saw molest
> Pale Thought no more : o'er Trade's contentious hell
> Meek Quiet spreads her wings invisible.
> And when thou com'st, less silent are the fields,
> Through whose sweet paths the toil-freed townsman steals.
> To him the very air a banquet yields.
> Envious he watches the poised hawk that wheels
> His flight on chainless winds. Each cloud reveals
> A paradise of beauty to his eye.
> His little Boys are with him, seeking flowers,
> Or chasing the too-venturous gilded fly.
> So by the daisy's side he spends the hours,

Renewing friendship with the budding bowers:
And while might, beauty, good without alloy,
Are mirror'd in his children's happy eyes,—
In His great Temple offering thankful joy
To Him, the infinitely Great and Wise,
With soul attuned to Nature's harmonies,
Serene and cheerful as a sporting child,—
His *heart* refuses to believe that man
Could turn into a hell the blooming wild,
The blissful country where his childhood ran
A race with infant rivers, ere began—

—'king-humbling' Bread-tax, 'blind Misrule,' and several other crabbed things!

And so our Corn-Law Rhymer plays his part. In this wise does he indite and act his Drama of Life, which for him is all-too Domestic-Tragical. It is said, 'the good actor soon makes 'us forget the bad theatre, were it but a barn; while, again, 'nothing renders so apparent the badness of the bad actor as 'a theatre of peculiar excellence.' How much more in a theatre and drama such as these of Life itself! One other item, however, we must note in that ill-decorated Sheffield theatre: the back-scene and bottom-decoration of it all; which is no other than a Workhouse. Alas, the Workhouse is the bourne whither all these actors and workers are bound; whence none that has once passed it returns! A bodeful sound, like the rustle of approaching world-devouring tornadoes, quivers through their whole existence; and the voice of it is, Pauperism! The thanksgiving they offer up to Heaven is, that they are not yet Paupers; the earnest cry of their prayer is, that 'God would shield them from the bitterness of Parish Pay.'

Mournful enough, that a white European Man must pray wistfully for what the horse he drives is sure of,—That the strain of his whole faculties may not fail to earn him food and lodging. Mournful that a gallant manly spirit, with an eye to discern the world, a heart to reverence it, a hand cunning and willing to labour in it, must be haunted with such a fear. The grim end of it all, Beggary! A soul loathing, what true souls ever loath, Dependence, help from the unworthy to help; yet sucked into the world-whirlpool,—able to do no other: the highest in man's heart struggling vainly against the lowest in

man's destiny! In good truth, if many a sickly and sulky Byron, or Byronlet, glooming over the woes of existence, and how unworthy God's Universe is to have so distinguished a resident, could transport himself into the patched coat and sooty apron of a Sheffield Blacksmith, made with as strange faculties and feelings as he, made by God Almighty all one as he was,—it would throw a light on much for him.

Meanwhile, is it not frightful as well as mournful to consider how the wide-spread evil is spreading wider and wider? Most persons, who have had eyes to look with, may have verified, in their own circle, the statement of this Sheffield Eyewitness, and 'from their own knowledge and observation fearlessly declare that the little master-manufacturer, that the 'working man generally, is in a much worse condition than 'he was twenty-five years ago.' Unhappily, the fact is too plain; the reason and scientific necessity of it is too plain. In this mad state of things, every new man is a new misfortune; every new market a new complexity; the chapter of chances grows ever more incalculable; the hungry gamesters (whose stake is their life) are ever increasing in numbers; the world-movement rolls on: by what method shall the weak and help-needing, who has none to help him, withstand it? Alas, how many brave hearts, ground to pieces in that unequal battle, have already sunk; in every sinking heart, a Tragedy, less famous than that of the Sons of Atreus; wherein, however, if no 'kingly house,' yet a manly house went to the dust, and a whole manly lineage was swept away! Must it grow worse and worse, till the last brave heart is broken in England; and this same 'brave Peasantry' has become a kennel of wild-howling ravenous Paupers? God be thanked! there is some feeble shadow of hope that the change may have begun while it was yet time. You may lift the pressure from the free man's shoulders, and bid him go forth rejoicing; but lift the slave's burden, he will only wallow the more composedly in his sloth: a nation of degraded men cannot be raised up, except by what we rightly name a miracle.

Under which point of view also, these little Volumes, indicating such a character in such a place, are not without significance. One faint symptom, perhaps, that clearness will return, that there is a possibility of its return. It is as if from that

Gehenna of Manufacturing Radicalism, from amid its loud roaring and cursing, whereby nothing became feasible, nothing knowable, except this only, that misery and malady existed there, we heard now some manful tone of reason and determination, wherein alone can there be profit, or promise of deliverance. In this Corn-Law Rhymer we seem to trace something of the antique spirit; a spirit which had long become invisible among our working as among other classes; which here, perhaps almost for the first time, reveals itself in an altogether modern political vesture. 'The Pariahs of the Isle of Woe,' as he passionately names them, are no longer Pariahs if they have become Men. Here is one man of their tribe; in several respects a true man; who has abjured Hypocrisy and Servility, yet not therewith trodden Religion and Loyalty under foot; not without justness of insight, devoutness, peaceable heroism of resolve; who, in all circumstances, even in these strange ones, will be found quitting himself like a man. One such that has found a voice: who knows how many mute but not inactive brethren he may have, in his own and in all other ranks? Seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal! These are the men, wheresoever found, who are to stand forth in England's evil day, on whom the hope of England rests.

For it has been often said, and must often be said again, that all Reform except a moral one will prove unavailing. Political Reform, pressingly enough wanted, can indeed root-out the weeds (gross deep-fixed lazy dock-weeds, poisonous obscene hemlocks, ineffectual spurry in abundance); but it leaves the ground *empty*,—ready either for noble fruits, or for new worse tares! And how else is a Moral Reform to be looked for but in this way, that more and more Good Men are, by a bountiful Providence, sent hither to disseminate Goodness; literally to *sow* it, as in seeds shaken abroad by the living tree? For such, in all ages and places, is the nature of a Good Man; he is ever a mystic creative centre of Goodness: his influence, if we consider it, is not to be measured; for his works do not die, but being of Eternity, are eternal; and in new transformation, and ever-wider diffusion, endure, living and life-giving. Thou who exclaimest over the horrors and baseness of the Time, and how Diogenes would now need *two* lanterns in daylight, think of this: over the Time thou hast no power; to re-

deem a World sunk in dishonesty has not been given thee: solely over one man therein thou hast a quite absolute uncontrollable power; him redeem, him make honest; it will be something, it will be much, and thy life and labour not in vain.

We have given no epitomised abstract of these little Books, such as is the Reviewer's wont: we would gladly persuade many a reader, high and low, who takes interest not in rhyme only, but in reason, and the condition of his fellow-man, to purchase and peruse them for himself. It is proof of an innate love of worth, and how willingly the Public, did not thousand-voiced Puffery so confuse it, would have to do with substances, and not with deceptive shadows, that these Volumes carry 'Third Edition' marked on them,—on all of them but the newest, whose fate with the reading world we yet know not; which, however, seems to deserve not worse but better than either of its forerunners.

Nay, it appears to us as if in this humble Chant of the *Village Patriarch* might be traced rudiments of a truly great idea; great though all undeveloped. The Rhapsody of 'Enoch Wray' is, in its nature and unconscious tendency, Epic; a whole world lies shadowed in it. What we might call an inarticulate, half-audible Epic! The main figure is a blind aged man; himself a ruin, and encircled with the ruin of a whole Era. Sad and great does that image of a universal Dissolution hover visible as a poetic background. Good old Enoch! He could *do* so much; was so wise, so valiant. No Ilion had he destroyed; yet somewhat he had built up: where the Mill stands noisy by its cataract, making corn into bread for men, it was Enoch that reared it, and made the rude rocks send it water; where the mountain Torrent now boils in vain, and is mere passing music to the traveller, it was Enoch's cunning that spanned it with that strong Arch, grim, time-defying. Where Enoch's hand or mind has been, Disorder has become Order; Chaos has receded some little handbreadth, had to give up some new handbreadth of his ancient realm. Enoch too has seen his followers fall round him (by stress of hardship, and the arrows of the gods), has performed funeral games for them, and raised sandstone memorials, and carved his *Abiit ad Plures* thereon, with his own hand. The living chronicle and epitome

of a whole century; when he departs, a whole century will become dead, historical.

Rudiments of an Epic, we say; and of the true Epic of our Time,—were the genius but arrived that could sing it! Not 'Arms and the Man;' 'Tools and the Man,' that were now our Epic. What indeed are Tools, from the Hammer and Plummet of Enoch Wray to this Pen we now write with, but Arms, wherewith to do battle against UNREASON without or within, and smite in pieces not miserable fellow-men, but the Arch-Enemy that makes us all miserable; henceforth the only legitimate battle!

Which Epic, as we granted, is here altogether imperfectly sung; scarcely a few notes thereof brought freely out: nevertheless with indication, with prediction that it will be sung. Such is the purport and merit of the *Village Patriarch;* it struggles towards a noble utterance, which however it can nowise find. Old Enoch is from the first speechless, heard of rather than heard or seen; at best, mute, motionless like a stone pillar of his own carving. Indeed, to find fit utterance for such meaning as lies struggling here, is a problem, to which the highest poetic minds may long be content to accomplish only approximate solutions. Meanwhile, our honest Rhymer, with no guide but the instinct of a clear natural talent, has created and adjusted somewhat, not without vitality of union; has avoided somewhat, the road to which lay open enough. His *Village Patriarch*, for example, though of an elegiac strain, is not wholly lachrymose, not without touches of rugged gaiety;—is like Life itself, with tears and toil, with laughter and rude play, such as metallurgic Yorkshire sees it: in which sense, that wondrous Courtship of the sharp-tempered, oft-widowed Alice Green may pass, questionable, yet with a certain air of soot-stained genuineness. And so has, not a Picture, indeed, yet a sort of genial Study or Cartoon come together for him: and may endure there, after some flary oil-daubings, which we have seen framed with gilding, and hung-up in proud galleries, have become rags and rubbish.

To one class of readers especially, such Books as these ought to be interesting: to the highest, that is to say, the richest class. Among our Aristocracy, there are men, we trust there are many men, who feel that they also are workmen, born to

toil, ever in their great Taskmaster's eye, faithfully with heart and head for those that with heart and hand do, under the same great Taskmaster, toil for them;—who have even this noblest and hardest work set before them: To deliver out of that Egyptian bondage to Wretchedness, and Ignorance, and Sin, the hardhanded millions; of whom this hardhanded earnest witness and writer is here representative. To such men his writing will be as a Document, which they will lovingly interpret: what is dark and exasperated and acrid, in their humble Brother, they for themselves will enlighten and sweeten; taking thankfully what is the real purport of his message, and laying it earnestly to heart. Might an instructive relation and interchange between High and Low at length ground itself, and more and more perfect itself,—to the unspeakable profit of all parties; for if all parties are to love and help one another, the first step towards this is, that all thoroughly understand one another! To such rich men an authentic message from the hearts of poor men, from the heart of one poor man, will be welcome.

To another class of our Aristocracy, again, who unhappily feel rather that they are *not* workmen; and profess not so much to bear any burden, as to be themselves, with utmost attainable *steadiness*, and if possible *gracefulness*, borne,—such a phenomenon as this of the Sheffield Corn-Law Rhymer, with a Manchester Detrosier, and much else, pointing the same way, will be quite unwelcome; indeed, to the clearer-sighted, astonishing and alarming. It indicates that they find themselves, as Napoleon was wont to say, 'in a new position;'—a position wonderful enough; of extreme singularity, to which, in the whole course of History, there is perhaps but one case in some measure parallel. The case alluded to stands recorded in the *Book of Numbers:* the case of Balaam the son of Beor.

Truly, if we consider it, there are few passages more notable and pregnant in their way, than this of Balaam. The Midianitish Soothsayer (Truth-speaker, or as we should now say, Counsel-giver and Senator) is journeying forth, as he has from of old quite prosperously done, in the way of his vocation; not so much to 'curse the people of the Lord,' as to earn for himself a comfortable penny by such means as are possible and expedient; something, it is hoped, midway between cursing and blessing; which shall not, except in case of necessity, be

either a curse or a blessing, or indeed be anything so much as a Nothing that will look like a Something and bring wages in. For the man is not dishonest; far from it: still less is he honest; but above all things, he is, has been and will be, respectable. Did calumny ever dare to fasten itself on the fair fame of Balaam? In his whole walk and conversation, has he not shown consistency enough; ever doing and speaking the thing that was decent; with proper spirit maintaining his status; so that friend and opponent held him in respect, and he could defy the spiteful world to say on any occasion, *Herein* art thou a knave? And now as he jogs along, in official comfort, with brave official retinue, his heart filled with good things, his head with schemes for the Preservation of Game, the Suppression of Vice, and the Cause of Civil and Religious Liberty all over the World;—consider what a spasm, and life-clutching ice-taloned pang, must have shot through the brain and pericardium of Balaam, when his Ass not only on the sudden stood stock-still, defying spur and cudgel, but—*began to talk*, and that in a reasonable manner! Did not his face, elongating, collapse, and tremour occupy his joints? For the thin crust of Respectability has cracked asunder; and a bottomless preternatural Inane yawns under him instead. Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness: the spirit-stirring Vote, ear-piercing Hear; the big Speech that makes ambition virtue; soft Palm-greasing first of raptures, and Cheers that emulate sphere-music: Balaam's occupation's gone!—

As for our stout Corn-Law Rhymer, what can we say by way of valediction but this, "Well done; come again, doing better"? Advices enough there were; but all lie included under one: To keep his eyes open, and do honestly whatsoever his hand shall find to do. We have praised him for sincerity: let him become more and more sincere; casting out all remnants of Hearsay, Imitation, ephemeral Speculation; resolutely '*clearing* his mind of Cant.' We advised a wider course of reading: would he forgive us if we now suggested the question, Whether Rhyme is the only dialect he can write in; whether Rhyme is, after all, the natural or fittest dialect for him? In good Prose, which differs inconceivably from bad Prose, what may not be written, what may not be read; from a Waverley Novel to an Arabic Koran, to an English Bible! Rhyme has plain advant-

ages; which, however, are often purchased too dear. If the inward thought *can* speak itself, instead of sing itself, let it, especially in these quite unmusical days, do the former! In any case, if the inward Thought do not sing itself, that singing of the outward Phrase is a timber-toned false matter we could well dispense with. Will our Rhymer consider himself, then; and decide for what is actually best? Rhyme, up to this hour, never seems altogether obedient to him; and disobedient Rhyme, —who would ride on *it* that had once learned walking!

He takes amiss that some friends have admonished him to quit Politics: we will not repeat that admonition. Let him, on this as on all other matters, take solemn counsel with his own Socrates'-Demon; such as dwells in every mortal; such as he is a happy mortal who can hear the voice of, follow the behests of, like an unalterable law. At the same time, we could truly wish to see such a mind as his engaged rather in considering what, in his own sphere, could be *done*, than what, in his own or other spheres, ought to be *destroyed;* rather in producing or preserving the True, than in mangling and slashing asunder the False. Let him be at ease: the False is already dead, or lives only with a mock life. The death-sentence of the False was of old, from the first beginning of it, written in Heaven; and is now proclaimed in the Earth, and read aloud at all market-crosses; nor are innumerable volunteer tipstaves and headsmen wanting, to execute the same: for which needful service men inferior to him may suffice. Why should the heart of the Corn-Law Rhymer be troubled? Spite of 'Bread-tax,' he and his brave children, who will emulate their sire, have yet bread: the Workhouse, as we rejoice to fancy, has receded into the safe distance; and is now quite shut-out from his poetic pleasure-ground. Why should he afflict himself with devices of 'Boroughmongering gowls,' or the rage of the Heathen imagining a vain thing? This matter, which he calls Corn-Law, will not have completed itself, adjusted itself into clearness, for the space of a century or two: nay after twenty centuries, what will there, or can there be for the son of Adam but Work, Work, two hands quite *full* of Work! Meanwhile, is not the Corn-Law Rhymer already a king, though a belligerent one; king of his own mind and faculty; and what man in the long-run is king of more? Not one in the thousand, even among sceptred kings,

is king of so much. Be diligent in business, then; fervent in spirit. Above all things, lay aside anger, uncharitableness, hatred, noisy tumult; avoid them, as worse than Pestilence, worse than 'Bread-tax' itself:

> For it well beseemeth kings, all mortals it beseemeth well,
> To possess their souls in patience, and await what can betide.

ON HISTORY AGAIN.[1]

[1833.]

[The following singular Fragment on *History* forms part, as may be recognised, of the Inaugural Discourse delivered by our assiduous 'D. T.' at the opening of the *Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty*. The Discourse, if one may credit the Morning Papers, 'touched in the most wonderful manner, didactically, poetically, 'almost prophetically, on all things in this world and the next, in a 'strain of sustained or rather of suppressed passionate eloquence 'rarely witnessed in Parliament or out of it: the chief bursts were 'received with profound silence,'—interrupted, we fear, by snuff-taking. As will be seen, it is one of the didactic passages that we introduce here. The Editor of this Magazine is responsible for its accuracy, and publishes, if not with leave given, then with leave taken.—O. Y.]

* * * HISTORY recommends itself as the most profitable of all studies: and truly, for such a being as Man, who is born, and has to learn and work, and then after a measured term of years to depart, leaving descendants and performances, and so, in all ways, to vindicate himself as vital portion of a Mankind, no study could be fitter. History is the Letter of Instructions, which the old generations write and posthumously transmit to the new; nay it may be called, more generally still, the Message, verbal or written, which all Mankind delivers to every man; it is the only *articulate* communication (when the inarticulate and mute, intelligible or not, lie round us and in us, so strangely through every fibre of our being, every step of our activity) which the Past can have with the Present, the Distant with what is Here. All Books, therefore, were they but Song-books or treatises on Mathematics, are in the long-run historical documents—as indeed all Speech itself is: thus might we say, History is not only the fittest study, but the only study, and includes all others

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 41.

whatsoever. The Perfect in History, he who understood, and saw and knew within himself, *all* that the whole Family of Adam had hitherto *been* and hitherto *done*, were perfect in all learning extant or possible; needed not thenceforth to *study* any more; had thenceforth nothing left but to *be* and to *do* something himself, that others might make History of it, and learn of *him*.

Perfection in any kind is well known not to be the lot of man: but of all supernatural perfect-characters this of the Perfect in History (so easily conceivable, too) were perhaps the most miraculous. Clearly a faultless monster which the world is not to see, not even on paper. Had the Wandering Jew, indeed, begun to wander at Eden, and with a Fortunatus's Hat on his head! Nanac Shah too, we remember, steeped himself three days in some sacred Well; and there learnt all things: Nanac's was a far easier method; but unhappily not practicable —in this climate. Consider, however, at what immeasurable distance from this perfect Nanac your highest imperfect Gibbons play their part! Were there no brave men, thinkest thou, before Agamemnon? Beyond the Thracian Bosphorus, was all dead and void; from Cape Horn to Nova Zembla, round the whole habitable Globe, not a mouse stirring? Or, again, in reference to Time:—the Creation of the World is indeed old, compare it to the Year One; yet young, of yesterday, compare it to Eternity! Alas, all Universal History is but a sort of Parish History; which the 'P. P. Clerk of this Parish,' member of 'our Alehouse Club' (instituted for what 'Psalmody' is in request there) puts together,—in such sort as his fellow-members will praise. Of the *thing* now gone silent, named Past, which was once Present, and loud enough, how much do we know? Our 'Letter of Instructions' comes to us in the saddest state; falsified, blotted out, torn, lost and but a shred of it in existence; this too so difficult to read or spell.

Unspeakably precious meanwhile is our shred of a Letter, is our written or spoken Message, such as we have it. Only he who understands what has been, can know what should be and will be. It is of the last importance that the individual have ascertained his relation to the whole; 'an individual helps not,' it has been written; 'only he who unites with many at the proper hour.' How easy, in a sense, for your all-instructed Nanac

to work without waste or force (or what we call fault); and, in practice, act new History, as perfectly as, in theory, he knew the old! Comprehending what the given world was, what it had and what it wanted, how might his clear effort strike-in at the right time and the right point; wholly increasing the true current and tendency, nowhere cancelling itself in opposition thereto! Unhappily, such smooth-running, ever-accelerated course is nowise the one appointed us; cross-currents we have, perplexed back-floods; innumerable efforts (every new man is a new effort) consume themselves in aimless eddies: thus is the River of Existence so wild-flowing, wasteful; and whole multitudes, and whole generations, in painful unreason, spend and are spent on what can never profit. Of all which, does not one-half originate in this which we have named want of Perfection in History;—the other half, indeed, in another want still deeper, still more irremediable?

Here, however, let us grant that Nature, in regard to such historic want, is nowise blamable: taking up the other face of the matter, let us rather admire the pains she has been at, the truly magnificent provision she has made, that this same Message of Instructions might reach us in boundless plenitude. Endowments, faculties enough, we have: it is her wise will too that no faculty imparted to us shall rust from disuse; the miraculous faculty of Speech, once given, becomes not more a gift than a necessity; the Tongue, with or without much meaning, will keep in motion; and only in some La Trappe by unspeakable self-restraint forbear wagging. As little can the fingers that have learned the miracle of Writing lie idle; if there is a rage of speaking, we know also there is a rage of writing, perhaps the more furious of the two. It is said, 'so eager are men to speak, they will not let one another get to speech;' but, on the other hand, writing is usually transacted in private, and every man has his own desk and inkstand, and sits independent and unrestrainable there. Lastly, multiply this power of the Pen some ten-thousandfold: that is to say, invent the Printing-Press, with its Printer's Devils, with its Editors, Contributors, Booksellers, Billstickers, and see what it will do! Such are the means wherewith Nature, and Art the daughter of Nature, have equipped their favourite Man, for publishing himself to man.

Consider, now, two things: first, that one Tongue, of average velocity, will publish at the rate of a thick octavo volume per day; and then how many nimble-enough Tongues may be supposed to be at work on this Planet Earth, in this City London, at this hour! Secondly, that a Literary Contributor, if in good heart and urged by hunger, will many times, as we are credibly informed, accomplish his two Magazine sheets within the four-and-twenty hours; such Contributors being now numerable not by the thousand, but by the million. Nay, taking History, in its narrower, vulgar sense, as the mere chronicle of 'occurrences,' of things that can be, as we say, 'narrated,' our calculation is still but a little altered. Simple Narrative, it will be observed, is the grand staple of Speech; 'the common man,' says Jean Paul, 'is copious in Narrative, exiguous in Reflec-'tion; only with the cultivated man is it otherwise, reverse-'wise.' Allow even the thousandth part of human publishing for the emission of Thought, though perhaps the millionth were enough, we have still the nine hundred and ninety-nine employed in History proper, in relating occurrences, or conjecturing probabilities of such; that is to say, either in History or Prophecy, which is a new form of History:—and so the reader can judge with what abundance this life-breath of the human intellect is furnished in our world; whether Nature has been stingy to him or munificent. Courage, reader! Never can the historical inquirer want pabulum, better or worse: are there not forty-eight longitudinal feet of small-printed History in thy Daily Newspaper?

The truth is, if Universal History is such a miserable defective 'shred' as we have named it, the fault lies not in our historic organs, but wholly in our misuse of these; say rather, in so many wants and obstructions, varying with the various age, that pervert our right use of them; especially two wants that press heavily in all ages: want of Honesty, want of Understanding. If the thing published is not true, is only a supposition, or even a wilful invention, what can be done with it, except abolish it and annihilate it? But again, Truth, says Horne Tooke, means simply the thing *trowed*, the thing believed; and now, from this to the thing *itself*, what a new fatal deduction have we to suffer! Without Understanding, Belief itself will profit little: and how can your publishing avail, when

there was no vision in it, but mere blindness? For as in political appointments, the man you appoint is not he who was ablest to discharge the duty, but only he who was ablest to be appointed; so too, in all historic elections and selections, the maddest work goes on. The event worthiest to be known is perhaps of all others the least spoken of: nay, some say, it lies in the very nature of such events to be so. Thus, in those same forty-eight longitudinal feet of History, or even when they have stretched out into forty-eight longitudinal miles, of the like quality, there may not be the forty-eighth part of a hairsbreadth that will turn to anything. Truly, in these times, the quantity of printed Publication that will need to be consumed with fire, before the smallest permanent advantage can be drawn from it, might fill us with astonishment, almost with apprehension. Where, alas, is the intrepid Herculean Dr. Wagtail, that will reduce all these paper-mountains into tinder, and extract therefrom the three drops of Tinder-water Elixir?

For indeed, looking at the activity of the historic Pen and Press through this last half-century, and what bulk of History it yields for that period alone, and how it is henceforth like to increase in decimal or vigesimal geometric progression,—one might feel as if a day were not distant, when perceiving that the whole Earth would not now contain those writings of what was done in the Earth, the human memory must needs sink confounded, and cease remembering!—To some the reflection may be new and consolatory, that this state of ours is not so unexampled as it seems; that with memory and things memorable the case was always intrinsically similar. The Life of Nero occupies some diamond pages of our Tacitus: but in the parchment and papyrus archives of Nero's generation how many did it fill? The author of the *Vie de Sénèque*, at this distance, picking-up a few residuary snips, has with ease made two octavos of it. On the other hand, were the contents of the then extant Roman memories, or, going to the utmost length, were all that was then *spoken* on it, put in types, how many 'longitudinal feet' of small-pica had we,—in belts that would go round the Globe!

History, then, before it can become Universal History, needs of all things to be compressed. Were there no epitomising of History, one could not remember beyond a week. Nay, go to

that with it, and exclude compression altogether, we could not remember an hour, or at all: for Time, like Space, is *infinitely* divisible; and an hour with its events, with its sensations and emotions, might be diffused to such expansion as should cover the whole field of memory, and push all else over the limits. Habit, however, and the natural constitution of man, do themselves prescribe serviceable rules for remembering; and keep at a safe distance from us all such fantastic possibilities;—into which only some foolish Mahomedan Caliph, ducking his head in a bucket of enchanted water, and so beating-out one wet minute into seven long years of servitude and hardship, could fall. The rudest peasant has his complete set of Annual Registers legibly printed in his brain; and, without the smallest training in Mnemonics, the proper pauses, subdivisions and subordinations of the little to the great, all introduced there. Memory and Oblivion, like Day and Night, and indeed like all other Contradictions in this strange dualistic Life of ours, are necessary for each other's existence: Oblivion is the dark page, whereon Memory writes her light-beam characters, and makes them legible; were it all light, nothing could be read there, any more than if it were all darkness.

As with man and these autobiographic Annual-Registers of his, so goes it with Mankind and its Universal History, which also is *its* Autobiography: a like unconscious talent of remembering and of forgetting again does the work here. The transactions of the day, were they never so noisy, cannot remain loud forever; the morrow comes with its new noises, claiming also to be registered: in the immeasurable conflict and concert of this chaos of existence, figure after figure sinks, as *all* that has emerged must one day sink: what cannot be kept in mind will even go out of mind; History contracts itself into readable extent; and at last, in the hands of some Bossuet or Müller, the whole printed History of the World, from the Creation downwards, has grown shorter than that of the Ward of Portsoken for one solar day.

Whether such contraction and epitome is always wisely formed, might admit of question; or rather, as we say, admits of no question. Scandalous Cleopatras and Messalinas, Caligulas and Commoduses, in unprofitable proportion, survive for memory; while a scientific Pancirollus has to write his Book

of Arts Lost; and a moral Pancirollus, were the vision lent him, might write a still more mournful Book of Virtues Lost; of noble men, doing and daring and enduring, whose heroic life, as a new revelation and development of Life itself, were a possession for all, but is now lost and forgotten, History having otherwise filled her page. In fact, here as elsewhere, what we call Accident governs much; in any case, History must come together not as it should, but as it can and will.

Remark nevertheless how, by natural tendency alone, and as it were without man's forethought, a certain fitness of selection, and this even to a high degree, becomes inevitable. Wholly worthless the selection could not be, were there no better rule than this to guide it: that men permanently speak only of what is extant and actively alive beside them. Thus do the things that have produced fruit, nay whose fruit still grows, turn out to be the things chosen for record and writing of; which things alone were great, and worth recording. The Battle of Châlons, where Hunland met Rome, and the Earth was played for, at sword-fence, by two earth-bestriding giants, the sweep of whose swords cut kingdoms in pieces, hovers dim in the languid remembrance of a few; while the poor police-court Treachery of a wretched Iscariot, transacted in the wretched land of Palestine, centuries earlier, for 'thirty pieces of silver,' lives clear in the heads, in the hearts of all men. Nay moreover, as only that which bore fruit was great; so of all things, that whose fruit is still here and growing must be the greatest, the best worth remembering; which again, as we see, by the very nature of the case, is mainly the thing remembered. Observe, too, how this 'mainly' tends always to become a 'solely,' and the approximate continually approaches nearer: for triviality after triviality, as it perishes from the living activity of men, drops away from their speech and memory, and the great and vital more and more exclusively survive there. Thus does Accident correct Accident; and in the wondrous boundless jostle of things (an aimful POWER presiding over it, say rather, dwelling *in* it), a result comes out that may be put-up with.

Curious, at all events, and worth looking at once in our life, is this same compressure of History, be the process thereof what it may. How the 'forty-eight longitudinal feet' have shrunk together after a century, after ten centuries! Look back from

end to beginning, over any History; over our own *England:* how, in rapidest law of perspective, it dwindles from the canvas! An unhappy Sybarite, if we stand within two centuries of him and name him Charles Second, shall have twelve times the space of a heroic Alfred; two or three thousand times, if we name him George the Fourth. The whole Saxon Heptarchy, though events, to which Magna Charta, and the world-famous Third Reading, are as dust in the balance, took place then,—for did not England, to mention nothing else, get itself, if not represented in Parliament, yet converted to Christianity?—the whole Saxon Heptarchy, I say, is summed-up practically in that one sentence of Milton's, the only one succeeding writers have copied, or readers remembered, of the 'fighting and flocking of kites and crows.' Neither was that an unimportant wassail-night, when the two black-browed Brothers, strongheaded, headstrong, Hengst and Horsa (*Stallion* and *Horse*), determined on a man-hunt in Britain, the boar-hunt at home having got overcrowded; and so, of a few hungry Angles made an English Nation, and planted it here, and—produced *thee*, O Reader! Of Hengst's whole campaignings scarcely half a page of good Narrative can now be written; the *Lord Mayor's Visit to Oxford* standing, meanwhile, revealed to mankind in a respectable volume. Nay what of this? Does not the Destruction of a Brunswick Theatre take above a million times as much telling as the Creation of a World?

To use a ready-made similitude, we might liken Universal History to a magic web; and consider with astonishment how, by philosophic insight and indolent neglect, the ever-growing fabric wove itself forward, out of that ravelled immeasurable mass of threads and thrums, which we name *Memoirs;* nay, at each new lengthening, at each new *epoch*, changed its whole proportions, its hue and structure to the very origin. Thus, do not the records of a Tacitus acquire new meaning, after seventeen hundred years, in the hands of a Montesquieu? Niebuhr has to reinterpret for us, at a still greater distance, the writings of a Titus Livius: nay, the religious archaic chronicles of a Hebrew Prophet and Lawgiver escape not the like fortune; and many a ponderous Eichhorn scans, with new-ground philosophic spectacles, the revelation of a Moses, and strives to reproduce for this century what, thirty centuries ago, was of plainly in-

finite significance to all. Consider History with the beginnings of it stretching dimly into the remote Time; emerging darkly out of the mysterious Eternity: the ends of it enveloping *us* at this hour, whereof we at this hour, both as actors and relators, form part! In shape we might mathematically name it *Hyperbolic-Asymptotic;* ever of *infinite* breadth around us; soon shrinking within narrow limits: ever narrowing more and more into the infinite depth behind us. In essence and significance it has been called 'the true Epic Poem, and universal Divine 'Scripture, *whose* "plenary inspiration" no man, out of Bedlam 'or in it, shall bring in question.'

* * * * *

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

THE TALE.[1]

BY GOETHE.

[1832.]

THAT Goethe, many years ago, wrote a piece named *Das Mährchen* (The Tale); which the admiring critics of Germany contrived to criticise by a stroke of the pen; declaring that it was indeed *The* Tale, and worthy to be called the Tale of Tales (*das Mährchen aller Mährchen*),—may appear certain to most English readers, for they have repeatedly seen as much in print. To some English readers it may appear certain, furthermore, that they personally know this Tale of Tales; and can even pronounce it to deserve no such epithet, and the admiring critics of Germany to be little other than blockheads.

English readers! the first certainty is altogether indubitable; the second certainty is not worth a rush.

That same *Mährchen aller Mährchen* you may see with your own eyes, at this hour, in the Fifteenth Volume of *Goethes Werke;* and seeing is believing. On the other hand, that English 'Tale of Tales,' put forth some years ago as the Translation thereof, by an individual connected with the Periodical Press of London (his Periodical vehicle, if we remember, broke down soon after, and was rebuilt, and still runs, under the name of *Court Journal*),—was a Translation, miserable enough, of a quite different thing; a thing, not a *Mährchen* (Fabulous Tale) at all, but an *Erzählung* or common fictitious Narrative; having no manner of relation to the real piece (beyond standing in the same Volume); not so much as Milton's *Tetrachordon* of Divorce has to his *Allegro* and *Penseroso!* In this way do individuals connected with the Periodical Press of London play their part, and commodiously befool

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 33.

thee, O Public of English readers, and can serve thee with a mass of roasted grass, and name it stewed venison; and will continue to do so, till thou—open thy eyes, and from a blind monster become a seeing one.

This mistake we did not publicly note at the time of its occurrence; for two good reasons: first, that while mistakes are increasing, like Population, at the rate of Twelve Hundred a-day, the benefit of seizing *one*, and throttling it, would be perfectly inconsiderable: second, that we were not then in existence. The highly composite astonishing Entity, which here as 'O. Y.' addresses mankind for a season, still slumbered (his elements scattered over Infinitude, and working under other shapes) in the womb of Nothing! Meditate on us a little, O reader: if thou wilt consider who and what we are; what Powers, of Cash, Esurience, Intelligence, Stupidity and Mystery created us, and what work we do and will do, there shall be no end to thy amazement.

This mistake, however, we do now note; induced thereto by occasion. By the fact, namely, that a genuine English Translation of that *Mährchen* has been handed-in to us for judgment; and now (such judgment having proved merciful) comes out from us in the way of publication. Of the Translation we cannot say much; by the colour of the paper, it may be some seven years old, and have lain perhaps in smoky repositories: it is not a good Translation; yet also not wholly bad; faithful to the original (as we can vouch, after strict trial); conveys the real meaning, though with an effort: here and there our pen has striven to help it, but could not do much. The poor Translator, who signs himself 'D. T.,' and affects to carry matters with a high hand, though, as we have ground to surmise, he is probably in straits for the necessaries of life,—has, at a more recent date, appended numerous Notes; wherein he will convince himself that more meaning lies in his *Mährchen* 'than in all the Literature of our century:' some of these we have retained, now and then with an explanatory or exculpatory word of our own; the most we have cut away, as superfluous and even absurd. Superfluous and even absurd, we say: D. T. can take this of us as he likes; we know him, and what is in him, and what is not in him; believe that he will prove reasonable; can do either way. At all events, let one of the notablest Performances produced for the last thousand years be now, through his organs (since no other, in this elapsed half-century, have offered themselves), set before an undiscerning public.

We too will premise our conviction that this *Mährchen* presents a phantasmagoric Adumbration, pregnant with deepest significance; though nowise that D. T. has so accurately evolved the same. Listen notwithstanding to a remark or two, extracted from his immeasurable Proem:

'Dull men of this country,' says he, 'who pretend to admire

'Goethe, smiled on me when I first asked the meaning of this Tale. '"Meaning!" answered they: "it is a wild arabesque, without meaning 'or purpose at all, except to dash together, copiously enough, confused 'hues of Imagination, and see what will come of them." Such is still 'the persuasion of several heads; which nevertheless would perhaps 'grudge to be considered wigblocks.'—Not impossible: the first Sin in our Universe was Lucifer's, that of Self-conceit. But hear again; what is more to the point:

'The difficulties of interpretation are exceedingly enhanced by one 'circumstance, not unusual in other such writings of Goethe's; namely, 'that this is no Allegory; which, as in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, you 'have only once for all to find the key of, and so go on unlocking: it 'is a Phantasmagory, rather; wherein things the most heterogeneous 'are, with homogeneity of figure, emblemed forth; which would re- 'quire not one key to unlock it, but, at different stages of the business, 'a dozen successive keys. Here you have Epochs of Time shadowed 'forth, there Qualities of the Human Soul; now it is Institutions, 'Historical Events, now Doctrines, Philosophic Truths: thus are all 'manner of "entities and quiddities and ghosts of defunct bodies" 'set flying; you have the whole Four Elements chaotico-creatively 'jumbled together, and spirits enough embodying themselves, and ro- 'guishly peering through, in the confused wild-working mass! * * *

'So much, however, I will stake my whole money-capital and lite- 'rary character upon: that here is a wonderful EMBLEM OF UNIVERSAL 'HISTORY set forth; more especially a wonderful Emblem of this our 'wonderful and woful "Age of Transition;" what men have been and 'done, what they are to be and do, is, in this Tale of Tales, poetico- 'prophetically typified, in such a style of grandeur and celestial brilli- 'ancy and life, as the Western Imagination has not elsewhere reached; 'as only the Oriental Imagination, and in the primeval ages, was wont 'to attempt.'—Here surely is good wine, with a big bush! Study the Tale of Tales, O reader: even in the bald version of D. T., there will be meaning found. He continues in this triumphant style:

'Can any mortal head (not a wigblock) doubt that the Giant of 'this Poem means SUPERSTITION? That the Ferryman has something 'to do with the PRIESTHOOD; his Hut with the CHURCH?

'Again, might it not be presumed that the River were TIME; and 'that it flowed (as Time does) between two worlds? Call the world, 'or country on this side, where the fair Lily dwells, the world of 'SUPERNATURALISM; the country on that side, NATURALISM, the 'working week-day world where we all dwell and toil: whosoever or 'whatsoever introduces itself, and appears, in the firm-earth of human 'business, or as we well say, *comes into* Existence, must proceed *from* 'Lily's supernatural country; whatsoever of a material sort deceases 'and disappears might be expected to go *thither*. Let the reader con- 'sider this, and note what comes of it.

'To get a free solid communication established over this same wondrous River of Time, so that the Natural and Supernatural may stand in friendliest neighbourhood and union, forms the grand action of this Phantasmagoric Poem: is not such also, let me ask thee, the grand action and summary of Universal History; the one problem of Human Culture; the thing which Mankind (once the three daily meals of victual were moderately secured) has ever striven after, and must ever strive after?—Alas! we observe very soon, matters stand on a most distressful footing, in this of Natural and Supernatural: there are three conveyances across, and all bad, all incidental, temporary, uncertain: the worst of the three, one would think, and the worst conceivable, were the Giant's Shadow, at sunrise and sunset; the best that Snake-bridge at noon, yet still only a bad-best. Consider again our trustless, rotten, revolutionary "age of transition," and see whether this too does not fit it!

'If you ask next, Who these other strange characters are, the Snake, the Will-o'-wisps, the Man with the Lamp? I will answer, in general and afar off, that *Light* must signify human Insight, Cultivation, in one sort or other. As for the Snake, I know not well what name to call it by; nay perhaps, in our scanty vocabularies, there is no *name* for it, though that does not hinder its being a thing, genuine enough. Meditation; Intellectual Research; Understanding; in the most general acceptation, Thought: all these come near designating it; none actually designates it. Were I bound, under legal penalties, to give the creature a name, I should say, THOUGHT rather than another.

'But what if our Snake, and so much else that works here beside it, were neither a *quality*, nor a *reality*, nor a *state*, nor an *action*, in any kind; none of these things purely and alone, but something intermediate and partaking of them all! In which case, to *name* it, in vulgar speech, were a still more frantic attempt: it is unnameable in speech; and remains only the allegorical Figure known in this Tale by the name of Snake, and more or less *resembling* and shadowing-forth somewhat that speech has named, or might name. It is this heterogeneity of nature, pitching your solidest Predicables heels-over-head, throwing you half-a-dozen Categories into the melting-pot at once,—that so unspeakably bewilders a Commentator, and for moments is nigh reducing him to *delirium saltans*.

'The Will-o'-wisps, that laugh and jig, and compliment the ladies, and eat gold and shake it from them, I for my own share take the liberty of viewing as some shadow of ELEGANT CULTURE, or modern Fine Literature; which by and by became so sceptical-destructive; and did, as French Philosophy, eat Gold (or Wisdom) enough, and shake it out again. In which sense, their coming (into Existence) by the old Ferryman's (by the Priesthood's) assistance, and almost oversetting his boat, and then laughing at him, and trying to skip-off from

, him, yet being obliged to stop till they had satisfied him: all this, to ' the discerning eye, has its significance.

'As to the Man with the Lamp, in him and his gold-*giving*, jewel- ' forming and otherwise so miraculous Light, which "casts no shadow," ' and "cannot illuminate what is wholly otherwise in darkness,"—I see ' what you might name the celestial REASON of Man (Reason as con- ' trasted with Understanding, and superordinated to it), the purest ' essence of his seeing Faculty; which manifests itself as the Spirit of ' Poetry, of Prophecy, or whatever else of highest in the intellectual ' sort man's mind can do. We behold this respectable, venerable Lamp- ' bearer everywhere present in time of need; directing, accomplishing, ' working, wonder-working, finally victorious;—as, in strict reality, it ' is ever (if we will study it) the Poetic Vision that lies at the bottom ' of all other Knowledge or Action; and is the source and creative ' fountain of whatsoever mortals *ken* or *can*, and mystically and miracu- ' lously guides them forward whither they are to go. Be the Man with ' the Lamp, then, named REASON; mankind's noblest inspired Insight ' and Light; whereof all the other lights are but effluences, and more ' or less discoloured emanations.

'His Wife, poor old woman, we shall call PRACTICAL ENDEAVOUR; ' which as married to Reason, to spiritual Vision and Belief, first ' makes-up man's being here below. Unhappily the ancient couple, we ' find, are but in a decayed condition: the better emblems are they of ' Reason and Endeavour in this our "transitionary age"! The Man ' presents himself in the garb of a peasant, the Woman has grown old, ' garrulous, querulous; both live nevertheless in their "ancient cot- ' tage," better or worse, the roof-tree of which still holds together over ' them. And then those mischievous Will-o'-wisps, who pay the old ' lady such court, and eat all the old gold (all that was wise and beau- ' tiful and desirable) off her walls; and show the old stones, quite ugly ' and bare, as they had not been for ages! Besides they have killed ' poor Mops, the plaything, and joy and fondling of the house;—as ' has not that same Elegant Culture, or French Philosophy done, where- ' soever it has arrived? Mark, notwithstanding, how the Man with the ' Lamp puts it all right again, reconciles everything, and makes the ' finest business out of what seemed the worst.

'With regard to the Four Kings, and the Temple which lies fa- ' shioned underground, please to consider all this as the Future lying ' prepared and certain under the Present: you observe, not only in- ' spired Reason (or the Man with the Lamp), but scientific Thought (or ' the Snake), can discern it lying there: nevertheless much work must ' be done, innumerable difficulties fronted and conquered, before it can ' rise out of the depths (of the Future), and realise itself as the actual ' worshipping-place of man, and "the most frequented Temple in the ' whole Earth."

'As for the fair Lily and her ambulatory necessitous Prince, these

'are objects that I shall admit myself incapable of naming: yet nowise 'admit myself incapable of attaching meaning to. Consider them as 'the two disjointed Halves of this singular Dualistic Being of ours; a 'Being, I must say, the most utterly Dualistic; fashioned, from the 'very heart of it, out of Positive and Negative (what we happily call 'Light and Darkness, Necessity and Freewill, Good and Evil, and the 'like); everywhere out of *two* mortally opposed things, which yet must 'be united in vital love, if there is to be any *Life;*—a Being, I repeat, 'Dualistic beyond expressing; which will split in two, strike it in *any* 'direction, on *any* of its six sides; and does of itself split in two (into 'Contradiction), every hour of the day,—were not *Life* perpetually 'there, perpetually knitting it together again! But as to that cutting-'up, and parcelling, and labelling of the indivisible Human Soul into 'what are called "Faculties," it is a thing I have from of old eschewed, 'and even hated. A thing which you *must* sometimes do (or you can-'not *speak*); yet which is never done without Error hovering near you; 'for most part, without her pouncing on you, and quite blindfolding 'you.

'Let not us, therefore, in looking at Lily and her Prince be tempted 'to that practice: why should we try to *name* them at all? Enough, if 'we do feel that man's whole Being is riven asunder every way (in this '"transitionary age"), and yawning in hostile, irreconcilable contradic-'tion with itself: what good were it to know farther in what *direction* 'the rift (as our Poet here pleased to represent it) had taken effect? 'Fancy, however, that these two HALVES of Man's Soul and Being 'are separated, in pain and enchanted obstruction, from one another. 'The better, fairer Half sits in the Supernatural country, deadening and 'killing; alas, not permitted to come across into the Natural visible 'country, and there make all blessed and alive! The rugged stronger 'Half, in such separation, is quite lamed and paralytic; wretched, for-'lorn, in a state of death-life, must he wander to and fro over the River of 'Time; all that is dear and essential to him, imprisoned there; which 'if he look at, he grows still weaker, which if he touch, he dies. Poor 'Prince! And let the judicious reader, who has read the Era he lives 'in, or even spelt the alphabet thereof, say whether, with the paralytic-'lamed Activity of man (hampered and hamstrung in a "transitionary 'age" of Scepticism, Methodism; atheistic Sarcasm, hysteric Orgasm; 'brazen-faced Delusion, Puffery, Hypocrisy, Stupidity, and the whole 'Bill and nothing but the Bill), it is not even so? Must not poor man's 'Activity (like this poor Prince) wander from Natural to Supernatural, 'and back again, disconsolate enough; unable to *do* anything, except 'merely wring its hands, and, whimpering and blubbering, lamentably 'inquire: *What* shall I do?

'But Courage! Courage! The Temple is built (though under-'ground); the Bridge shall arch itself, the divided Two shall clasp each 'other as flames do, rushing into one; and all that ends well shall be

'well! Mark only how, in this inimitable Poem, worthy of an 'Olympic crown, or prize of the Literary Society, it is represented as 'proceeding!'

So far D. T.; a commentator who at least does not want confidence in himself: whom we shall only caution not to be too confident; to remember always that, as he once says, 'Phantasmagory is not Allegory;' that much exists, under our very noses, which has no 'name,' and can get none; that the 'River of Time' and so forth may be one thing, or more than one, or none; that, in short, there is risk of the too valiant D. T.'s bamboozling himself in this matter; being led from puddle to pool; and so left standing at last, like a foolish mystified nose-of-wax, wondering where the devil he is.

To the simpler sort of readers we shall also extend an advice; or be it rather, proffer a petition. It is to fancy themselves, for the time being, delivered altogether from D. T.'s company; and to read this *Mährchen*, as if it were there only for its own sake, and those tag-rag Notes of his were so much blank paper. Let the simpler sort of readers say now how they like it! If unhappily, on looking back, some spasm of 'the malady of thought' begin afflicting them, let such Notes be then enquired of, but not till then, and then also with distrust. Pin thy faith to no man's sleeve; hast thou not two eyes of thy own?

The Commentator himself cannot, it is to be hoped, imagine that he has exhausted the matter. To decipher and represent the *genesis* of this extraordinary Production, and what was the Author's state of mind in producing it; to *see*, with dim common eyes, what the great Goethe, with inspired poetic eyes, then saw; and paint to oneself the thick-coming shapes and many-coloured splendours of his 'Prospero's Grotto,' at that hour: this were what we could call complete criticism and commentary; what D. T. is far from having done, and ought to fall on his face, and confess that he can never do.

We shall conclude with remarking two things. First, that D. T. does not appear to have set eye on any of those German Commentaries on this Tale of Tales; or even to have heard, credently, that such exist: an omission, in a professed Translator, which he himself may answer for. Secondly, that with all his boundless preluding, he has forgotten to insert the Author's own prelude; the passage, namely, by which this *Mährchen* is specially ushered in, and the key-note of it struck by the Composer himself, and the tone of the whole prescribed! This latter altogether glaring omission we now charitably supply; and then let D. T., and his illustrious Original, and the Readers of this Magazine take it among them. Turn to the latter part of the *Deutschen Ausgewanderten* (page 208, Volume XV. of the last Edition of *Goethes Werke*); it is written there, as we render it:

'"The Imagination," said Karl, "is a fine faculty; yet I like not 'when she works on what has actually happened: the airy forms she 'creates are welcome as things of their own kind; but uniting with

'Truth she produces oftenest nothing but monsters; and seems to me, 'in such cases, to fly into direct variance with Reason and Common 'Sense. She ought, you might say, to hang upon no object, to force no 'object on us; she must, if she is to produce Works of Art, play like 'a sort of music upon us; move us within ourselves, and this in such 'a way that we forget there is anything without us producing the move-'ment."

'"Proceed no farther," said the old man, "with your condition-'ings! To enjoy a product of Imagination, this also is a condition, 'that we enjoy it unconditionally; for Imagination herself cannot con-'dition and bargain; she must wait what shall be given her. She forms 'no plans, prescribes for herself no path; but is borne and guided by 'her own pinions; and hovering hither and thither, marks out the 'strangest courses; which in their direction are ever altering. Let 'me but, on my evening walk, call up again to life within me, some 'wondrous figures I was wont to play with in earlier years. This 'night I promise you a Tale, which shall remind you of Nothing and 'of All."'

And now for it.

O. Y.

THE TALE ('DAS MAHRCHEN'), BY GOETHE.

In his little Hut, by the great River, which a heavy rain had swoln to overflowing, lay the ancient Ferryman, asleep, wearied by the toil of the day. In the middle of the night,[2] loud voices awoke him; he heard that it was travellers wishing to be carried over.

Stepping out, he saw two large Will-o'-wisps, hovering to and fro on his boat, which lay moored: they said, they were in violent haste, and should have been already on the other side. The old Ferryman made no loitering; pushed off, and steered with his usual skill obliquely through the stream; while the two strangers whiffled and hissed together, in an unknown very rapid tongue, and every now and then broke out in loud laughter, hopping about, at one time on the gunwale and the seats, at another on the bottom of the boat.

"The boat is heeling!" cried the old man; "if you don't be quiet, it will overset; be seated, gentlemen of the wisp!"

[2] In the middle of the night, truly! In the middle of the Dark Ages, when what with Mahomedan Conquests, what with Christian Crusadings, Destructions of Constantinople, Discoveries of America, the TIME-River was indeed swoln to overflowing; and the *Ignes Fatui* (of Elegant Culture, of Literature) must needs feel in haste to get over into Existence, being much wanted; and apply to the Priesthood (respectable old Ferryman, roused out of sleep thereby!), who willingly introduced them, mischievous ungrateful imps as they were.—D. T.

At this advice they burst into a fit of laughter, mocked the old man, and were more unquiet than ever. He bore their mischief with patience, and soon reached the farther shore.

"Here is for your labour!" cried the travellers; and as they shook themselves, a heap of glittering gold-pieces jingled down into the wet boat. "For Heaven's sake, what are you about?" cried the old man; "you will ruin me forever! Had a single piece of gold got into the water, the stream, which cannot suffer gold, would have risen in horrid waves, and swallowed both my skiff and me; and who knows how it might have fared with you in that case? here, take back your gold."

"We can take nothing back, which we have once shaken from us," said the Lights.

"Then you give me the trouble," said the old man, stooping down, and gathering the pieces into his cap, "of raking them together, and carrying them ashore and burying them."

The Lights had leaped from the boat, but the old man cried: "Stay; where is my fare?"

"If you take no gold, you may work for nothing," cried the Will-o'-wisps.—"You must know that I am only to be paid with fruits of the earth."—"Fruits of the earth? we despise them, and have never tasted them."—"And yet I cannot let you go, till you have promised that you will deliver me three Cabbages, three Artichokes, and three large Onions."

The Lights were making-off with jests; but they felt themselves, in some inexplicable manner, fastened to the ground: it was the unpleasantest feeling they had ever had. They engaged to pay him his demand as soon as possible: he let them go, and pushed away. He was gone a good distance, when they called to him: "Old man! Holla, old man! the main point is forgotten!"[3] He was off, however, and did not hear them. He had fallen quietly down that side of the River, where, in a rocky spot, which the water never reached, he meant to bury the pernicious gold. Here, between two high crags, he found a monstrous chasm; shook the metal into it, and steered back to his cottage.

Now in this chasm lay the fair green Snake, who was roused from her sleep by the gold coming chinking down.[4] No sooner did she fix her eye on the glittering coins than she ate them all up, with the greatest relish, on the spot; and carefully picked out such pieces as were scattered in the chinks of the rock.

Scarcely had she swallowed them, when, with extreme delight, she began to feel the metal melting in her inwards, and spreading all over her body; and soon, to her lively joy, she observed that she was grown transparent and luminous. Long ago she had been told that this was

[3] What could this be? To ask whither their next road lay? It was useless to ask there: the respectable old Priesthood 'did not hear them.'—D.T.

[4] THOUGHT, Understanding, roused from her long sleep by the first produce of modern Belles Lettres; which she eagerly devours.—D.T.

possible; but now being doubtful whether such a light could last, her curiosity and the desire to be secure against the future, drove her from her cell, that she might see who it was that had shaken-in this precious metal. She found no one. The more delightful was it to admire her own appearance, and her graceful brightness, as she crawled along through roots and bushes, and spread out her light among the grass. Every leaf seemed of emerald, every flower was dyed with new glory. It was in vain that she crossed the solitary thickets; but her hopes rose high, when, on reaching the open country, she perceived from afar, a brilliancy resembling her own. "Shall I find my like at last, then?" cried she, and hastened to the spot. The toil of crawling through bog and reeds gave her little thought; for though she liked best to live in dry grassy spots of the mountains, among the clefts of rocks, and for most part fed on spicy herbs, and slaked her thirst with mild dew and fresh spring-water, yet for the sake of this dear gold, and in the hope of this glorious light, she would have undertaken anything you could propose to her.

At last, with much fatigue, she reached a wet rushy spot in the swamp, where our two Will-o'-wisps were frisking to and fro. She shoved herself along to them; saluted them, was happy to meet such pleasant gentlemen related to her family. The Lights glided towards her, skipped up over her, and laughed in their fashion. "Lady Cousin," said they, "you are of the horizontal line, yet what of that? It is true we are related only by the look; for, observe you," here both the Flames, compressing their whole breadth, made themselves as high and peaked as possible, "how prettily this taper length beseems us gentlemen of the vertical line! Take it not amiss of us, good Lady; what family can boast of such a thing? Since there ever was a Jack-o'-lantern in the world, no one of them has either sat or lain."

The Snake felt exceedingly uncomfortable in the company of these relations; for, let her hold her head as high as possible, she found that she must bend it to the earth again, would she stir from the spot;[5] and if in the dark thicket she had been extremely satisfied with her appearance, her splendour in the presence of these cousins seemed to lessen every moment, nay she was afraid that at last it would go out entirely.

In this embarrassment she hastily asked: If the gentlemen could not inform her, whence the glittering gold came, that had fallen a short while ago into the cleft of the rock; her own opinion was, that it had been a golden shower, and had trickled down direct from the sky. The Will-o'-wisps laughed, and shook themselves, and a multitude of gold-pieces came clinking down about them. The Snake pushed nimbly forwards to eat the coin. "Much good may it do you, Mistress," said

[5] True enough: Thought cannot fly and dance, as your wildfire of Belles Lettres may; she proceeds in the systole-diastole, up-and-down method; and must ever 'bend her head to the earth again' (in the way of Baconian Experiment), or she will not stir from the spot.—D. T.

the dapper gentlemen: "we can help you to a little more." They shook themselves again several times with great quickness, so that the Snake could scarcely gulp the precious victuals fast enough. Her splendour visibly began increasing; she was really shining beautifully, while the Lights had in the mean time grown rather lean and short of stature, without however in the smallest losing their good-humour.

"I am obliged to you forever," said the Snake, having got her wind again after the repast; "ask of me what you will; all that I can I will do."

"Very good!" cried the Lights. "Then tell us where the fair Lily dwells? Lead us to the fair Lily's palace and garden; and do not lose a moment, we are dying of impatience to fall down at her feet."

"This service," said the Snake with a deep sigh, "I cannot now do for you. The fair Lily dwells, alas, on the other side of the water." —"Other side of the water? And we have come across it, this stormy night! How cruel is the River to divide us! Would it not be possible to call the old man back?"

"It would be useless," said the Snake; "for if you found him ready on the bank, he would not take you in; he can carry any one to this side, none to yonder."

"Here is a pretty kettle of fish!" cried the Lights: "are there no other means of getting through the water?"—"There are other means, but not at this moment. I myself could take you over, gentlemen, but not till noon."—"That is an hour we do not like to travel in."—"Then you may go across in the evening, on the great Giant's shadow." —"How is that?"—"The great Giant lives not far from this; with his body he has no power; his hands cannot lift a straw, his shoulders could not bear a faggot of twigs; but with his shadow he has power over much, nay all.[6] At sunrise and sunset therefore he is strongest; so at evening you merely put yourself upon the back of his shadow, the Giant walks softly to the bank, and the shadow carries you across the water. But if you please, about the hour of noon, to be in waiting at that corner of the wood where the bushes overhang the bank, I myself will take you over and present you to the fair Lily: or on the other hand, if you dislike the noontide, you have just to go at nightfall to that bend of the rocks, and pay a visit to the Giant; he will certainly receive you like a gentleman."

With a slight bow, the Flames went off; and the Snake at bottom was not discontented to get rid of them; partly that she might enjoy the brightness of her own light, partly satisfy a curiosity with which, for a long time, she had been agitated in a singular way.

In the chasm, where she often crawled hither and thither, she had made a strange discovery. For although in creeping up and down

[6] Is not SUPERSTITION strongest when the sun is low? with body, powerless; with shadow, omnipotent?—D. T.

this abyss, she had never had a ray of light, she could well enough discriminate the objects in it, by her sense of touch. Generally she met with nothing but irregular productions of Nature; at one time she would wind between the teeth of large crystals, at another she would feel the barbs and hairs of native silver, and now and then carry out with her to the light some straggling jewels.[7] But to her no small wonder, in a rock which was closed on every side, she had come on certain objects which betrayed the shaping hand of man. Smooth walls on which she could not climb, sharp regular corners, well-formed pillars; and what seemed strangest of all, human figures which she had entwined more than once, and which appeared to her to be of brass, or of the finest polished marble. All these experiences she now wished to combine by the sense of sight, thereby to confirm what as yet she only guessed. She believed she could illuminate the whole of that subterranean vault by her own light; and hoped to get acquainted with these curious things at once. She hastened back; and soon found, by the usual way, the cleft by which she used to penetrate the Sanctuary.

On reaching the place, she gazed around with eager curiosity; and though her shining could not enlighten every object in the rotunda, yet those nearest her were plain enough. With astonishment and reverence she looked up into a glancing niche, where the image of an august King stood formed of pure Gold. In size the figure was beyond the stature of man, but by its shape it seemed the likeness of a little rather than a tall person. His handsome body was encircled with an unadorned mantle; and a garland of oak bound his hair together.

No sooner had the Snake beheld this reverend figure, than the King began to speak, and asked: "Whence comest thou?"—"From the chasms where the gold dwells," said the Snake.—"What is grander than gold?" inquired the King.—"Light," replied the Snake.—"What is more refreshing than light?" said he.—"Speech," answered she.

During this conversation, she had squinted to a side, and in the nearest niche perceived another glorious image. It was a Silver King in a sitting posture; his shape was long and rather languid; he was covered with a decorated robe; crown, girdle and sceptre were adorned with precious stones: the cheerfulness of pride was in his countenance; he seemed about to speak, when a vein which ran dimly-coloured over the marble wall, on a sudden became bright, and diffused a cheerful light throughout the whole Temple. By this brilliancy the Snake perceived a third King, made of Brass, and sitting mighty in shape, leaning on his club, adorned with a laurel garland, and more like a rock than a man. She was looking for the fourth, which was standing at the

[7] Primitive employments, and attainments, of Thought, in this dark den whither it is sent to dwell. For many long ages, it discerns 'nothing but irregular productions of Nature;' having indeed to pick material bed and board out of Nature and her irregular productions.—D. T.

greatest distance from her; but the wall opened, while the glittering vein started and split, as lightning does, and disappeared.

A Man of middle stature, entering through the cleft, attracted the attention of the Snake. He was dressed like a peasant, and carried in his hand a little Lamp, on whose still flame you liked to look, and which in a strange manner, without casting any shadow, enlightened the whole dome.[8]

"Why comest thou, since we have light?" said the golden King. —"You know that I may not enlighten what is dark."[9]—"Will my Kingdom end?" said the silver King.—"Late or never," said the old Man.

With a stronger voice the brazen King began to ask: "When shall I arise?"—"Soon," replied the Man.—"With whom shall I combine?" said the King.—"With thy elder brothers," said the Man. —"What will the youngest do?" inquired the King.—"He will sit down," replied the Man.

"I am not tired," cried the fourth King, with a rough faltering voice.[10]

While this speech was going on, the Snake had glided softly round the Temple, viewing everything; she was now looking at the fourth King close by him. He stood leaning on a pillar; his considerable form was heavy rather than beautiful. But what metal it was made of could not be determined. Closely inspected, it seemed a mixture of the three metals which its brothers had been formed of. But in the founding, these materials did not seem to have combined together fully; gold and silver veins ran irregularly through a brazen mass, and gave the figure an unpleasant aspect.

Meanwhile the gold King was asking of the Man, "How many secrets knowest thou?"—"Three," replied the Man.—"Which is the most important?" said the silver King.—"The open one," replied the other.[11]—"Wilt thou open it to us also?" said the brass King.— "When I know the fourth," replied the Man.—"What care I?" grumbled the composite King, in an undertone.

"I know the fourth," said the Snake; approached the old Man, and hissed somewhat in his ear. "The time is at hand!" cried the

[8] Poetic Light, celestial Reason!—D. T.

Let the reader, in one word, attend well to these four Kings: much annotation from D. T. is here necessarily swept out.—O. Y.

[9] What is wholly dark. Understanding precedes Reason: modern Science is come; modern Poesy is still but coming,—in Goethe (and whom else?).—D. T.

[10] Consider these Kings as Eras of the World's History; no, not as Eras, but as Principles which jointly or severally rule Eras. Alas, poor we, in this chaotic, soft-soldered 'transitionary age,' are so unfortunate as to live under the Fourth King.—D. T.

[11] Reader, hast thou any glimpse of the 'open secret'? I fear, not.—D.T Writer, art thou a goose? I fear, yes.—O. Y.

old Man, with a strong voice. The temple reëchoed, the metal statues sounded; and that instant the old Man sank away to the westward, and the Snake to the eastward; and both of them passed through the clefts of the rock, with the greatest speed.

All the passages, through which the old Man travelled, filled themselves, immediately behind him, with gold; for his Lamp had the strange property of changing stone into gold, wood into silver, dead animals into precious stones, and of annihilating all metals. But to display this power, it must shine alone. If another light were beside it, the Lamp only cast from it a pure clear brightness, and all living things were refreshed by it.[12]

The old Man entered his cottage, which was built on the slope of the hill. He found his Wife in extreme distress. She was sitting at the fire weeping, and refusing to be consoled. "How unhappy am I!" cried she: "Did not I entreat thee not to go away tonight?"—"What is the matter, then?" inquired the husband, quite composed.

"Scarcely wert thou gone," said she, sobbing, "when there came two noisy Travellers to the door: unthinkingly I let them in; they seemed to be a couple of genteel, very honourable people; they were dressed in flames, you would have taken them for Will-o'-wisps. But no sooner were they in the house, than they began, like impudent varlets, to compliment me,[13] and grew so forward that I feel ashamed to think of it."

"No doubt," said the husband with a smile, "the gentlemen were jesting: considering thy age, they might have held by general politeness."

"Age! what age?" cried the Wife: "wilt thou always be talking of my age? How old am I, then?—General politeness! But I know what I know. Look round there what a face the walls have; look at the old stones, which I have not seen these hundred years; every film of gold have they licked away, thou couldst not think how fast; and still they kept assuring me that it tasted far beyond common gold. Once they had swept the walls, the fellows seemed to be in high spirits, and truly in that little while they had grown much broader and brighter. They now began to be impertinent again, they patted me, and called me their queen, they shook themselves, and a shower of gold-pieces sprang from them; see how they are shining there under the bench! But ah, what misery! Poor Mops ate a coin or two; and look, he is lying in the chimney, dead. Poor Pug! O well-a-day! I did not see it till they were gone; else I had never promised to pay the Ferryman

[12] In Illuminated Ages, the Age of Miracles is said to cease; but it is only we that cease to see it, for we are still 'refreshed by it.'—D. T.

[13] Poor old Practical Endeavour! Listen to many an *encyclopedic* Diderot, humanised *Philosophe*, didactic singer, march-of-intellect man, and other 'impudent varlets' (who would never put their own finger to the work); and hear what 'compliments' they uttered.—D. T.

the debt they owe him."—"What do they owe him?" said the Man.—"Three Cabbages," replied the Wife, "three Artichokes and three Onions: I engaged to go when it was day, and take them to the River."

"Thou mayest do them that civility," said the old Man; "they may chance to be of use to us again."

"Whether they will be of use to us I know not; but they promised and vowed that they would."

Meantime the fire on the hearth had burnt low; the old Man covered-up the embers with a heap of ashes, and put the glittering gold-pieces aside; so that his little Lamp now gleamed alone, in the fairest brightness. The walls again coated themselves with gold, and Mops changed into the prettiest onyx that could be imagined. The alternation of the brown and black in this precious stone made it the most curious piece of workmanship.

"Take thy basket," said the Man, "and put the onyx into it; then take the three Cabbages, the three Artichokes and the three Onions; place them round little Mops, and carry them to the River. At noon the Snake will take thee over; visit the fair Lily, give her the onyx, she will make it alive by her touch, as by her touch she kills whatever is alive already. She will have a true companion in the little dog. Tell her, Not to mourn; her deliverance is near; the greatest misfortune she may look upon as the greatest happiness; for the time is at hand."

The old Woman filled her basket, and set out as soon as it was day. The rising sun shone clear from the other side of the River, which was glittering in the distance: the old Woman walked with slow steps, for the basket pressed upon her head, and it was not the onyx that so burdened her. Whatever lifeless thing she might be carrying, she did not feel the weight of it; on the other hand, in those cases the basket rose aloft, and hovered along above her head. But to carry any fresh herbage, or any little living animal, she found exceedingly laborious.[14] She had travelled on for some time, in a sullen humour, when she halted suddenly in fright, for she had almost trod upon the Giant's shadow, which was stretching towards her across the plain. And now, lifting up her eyes, she saw the monster of a Giant himself, who had been bathing in the River, and was just come out,[15] and she knew not how she should avoid him. The moment he perceived her, he began saluting her in sport, and the hands of his shadow soon caught hold of the basket. With dexterous ease they picked away from it a Cabbage, an Artichoke

[14] Why so? Is it because with 'lifeless things' (with inanimate *machinery*) all goes like clock-work, which it is, and 'the basket hovers aloft;' while with living things (were it but the culture of forest-trees) poor Endeavour has more difficulty?—D. T. Or is it chiefly because a Tale must be a Tale?—O. Y.

[15] Very proper in the huge Loggerhead *Superstition*, to bathe himself in the element of TIME, and get refreshment thereby.—D. T.

and an Onion, and brought them to the Giant's mouth, who then went his way up the River, and let the Woman go in peace.

She considered whether it would not be better to return, and supply from her garden the pieces she had lost; and amid these doubts, she still kept walking on, so that in a little while she was at the bank of the River. She sat long waiting for the Ferryman, whom she perceived at last, steering over with a very singular traveller. A young, noble-looking, handsome man, whom she could not gaze upon enough, stept out of the boat.

"What is it you bring?" cried the old Man.—"The greens which those two Will-o'-wisps owe you," said the Woman, pointing to her ware. As the Ferryman found only two of each sort, he grew angry, and declared he would have none of them. The Woman earnestly entreated him to take them; told him that she could not now go home, and that her burden for the way which still remained was very heavy. He stood by his refusal, and assured her that it did not rest with him. "What belongs to me," said he, "I must leave lying nine hours in a heap, touching none of it, till I have given the River its third." After much higgling, the old Man at last replied: "There is still another way. If you like to pledge yourself to the River, and declare yourself its debtor, I will take the six pieces; but there is some risk in it."—"If I keep my word, I shall run no risk?"—"Not the smallest. Put your hand into the stream," continued he, "and promise that within four-and-twenty hours you will pay the debt."

The old Woman did so; but what was her affright, when on drawing out her hand, she found it black as coal! She loudly scolded the old Ferryman; declared that her hands had always been the fairest part of her; that in spite of her hard work, she had all along contrived to keep these noble members white and dainty. She looked at the hand with indignation, and exclaimed in a despairing tone: "Worse and worse! Look, it is vanishing entirely; it is grown far smaller than the other."[16]

"For the present it but seems so," said the old Man; "if you do not keep your word, however, it may prove so in earnest. The hand will gradually diminish, and at length disappear altogether, though you have the use of it as formerly. Everything as usual you will be able to perform with it, only nobody will see it."—"I had rather that I could not use it, and no one could observe the want," cried she: "but what of that, I will keep my word, and rid myself of this black skin, and all anxieties about it." Thereupon she hastily took up her basket, which mounted of itself over her head, and hovered free above her in the air, as she hurried after the Youth, who was walking softly and

[16] A dangerous thing to pledge yourself to the Time-River;—as many a National Debt, and the like, blackening, bewitching the 'beautiful hand' of Endeavour, can witness.—D. T. Heavens!—O. Y.

thoughtfully down the bank. His noble form and strange dress had made a deep impression on her.

His breast was covered with a glittering coat of mail; in whose wavings might be traced every motion of his fair body. From his shoulders hung a purple cloak; around his uncovered head flowed abundant brown hair in beautiful locks: his graceful face, and his well-formed feet were exposed to the scorching of the sun. With bare soles, he walked composedly over the hot sand; and a deep inward sorrow seemed to blunt him against all external things.

The garrulous old Woman tried to lead him into conversation; but with his short answers he gave her small encouragement or information; so that in the end, notwithstanding the beauty of his eyes, she grew tired of speaking with him to no purpose, and took leave of him with these words: "You walk too slow for me, worthy sir; I must not lose a moment, for I have to pass the River on the green Snake, and carry this fine present from my husband to the fair Lily." So saying she stept faster forward; but the fair Youth pushed on with equal speed, and hastened to keep up with her. "You are going to the fair Lily!" cried he; "then our roads are the same. But what present is this you are bringing her?"

"Sir," said the Woman, "it is hardly fair, after so briefly dismissing the questions I put to you, to inquire with such vivacity about my secrets. But if you like to barter, and tell me your adventures, I will not conceal from you how it stands with me and my presents." They soon made a bargain; the dame disclosed her circumstances to him; told the history of the Pug, and let him see the singular gift.

He lifted this natural curiosity from the basket, and took Mops, who seemed as if sleeping softly, into his arms. "Happy beast!" cried he; "thou wilt be touched by her hands, thou wilt be made alive by her; while the living are obliged to fly from her presence to escape a mournful doom. Yet why say I mournful? Is it not far sadder and more frightful to be injured by her look, than it would be to die by her hand? Behold me," said he to the Woman; "at my years, what a miserable fate have I to undergo! This mail which I have honourably borne in war, this purple which I sought to merit by a wise reign, Destiny has left me; the one as a useless burden, the other as an empty ornament. Crown, and sceptre, and sword are gone; and I am as bare and needy as any other son of earth; for so unblessed are her bright eyes, that they take from every living creature they look-on all its force, and those whom the touch of her hand does not kill are changed to the state of shadows wandering alive."

Thus did he continue to bewail, nowise contenting the old Woman's curiosity, who wished for information not so much of his internal as of his external situation. She learned neither the name of his father, nor of his kingdom. He stroked the hard Mops, whom the sunbeams and the bosom of the youth had warmed as if he had been living. He

inquired narrowly about the Man with the Lamp, about the influences of the sacred light, appearing to expect much good from it in his melancholy case.

Amid such conversation, they descried from afar the majestic arch of the Bridge, which extended from the one bank to the other, glittering with the strangest colours in the splendours of the sun. Both were astonished; for until now they had never seen this edifice so grand. "How!" cried the Prince, "was it not beautiful enough, as it stood before our eyes, piled out of jasper and agate? Shall we not fear to tread it, now that it appears combined, in graceful complexity of emerald and chrysopras and chrysolite?" Neither of them knew the alteration that had taken place upon the Snake: for it was indeed the Snake, who every day at noon curved herself over the River, and stood forth in the form of a bold-swelling bridge.[17] The travellers stept upon it with a reverential feeling, and passed over it in silence.

No sooner had they reached the other shore, than the bridge began to heave and stir; in a little while, it touched the surface of the water, and the green Snake in her proper form came gliding after the wanderers. They had scarcely thanked her for the privilege of crossing on her back, when they found that, besides them three, there must be other persons in the company, whom their eyes could not discern. They heard a hissing, which the Snake also answered with a hissing; they listened, and at length caught what follows: "We shall first look about us in the fair Lily's Park," said a pair of alternating voices; "and then request you at nightfall, so soon as we are anywise presentable, to introduce us to this paragon of beauty. At the shore of the great Lake you will find us."—"Be it so," replied the Snake; and a hissing sound died away in the air.

Our three travellers now consulted in what order they should introduce themselves to the fair Lady; for however many people might be in her company, they were obliged to enter and depart singly, under pain of suffering very hard severities.

The Woman with the metamorphosed Pug in the basket first approached the garden, looking round for her Patroness; who was not difficult to find, being just engaged in singing to her harp. The finest tones proceeded from her, first like circles on the surface of the still lake, then like a light breath they set the grass and the bushes in motion. In a green enclosure, under the shadow of a stately group of many diverse trees, was she seated; and again did she enchant the eyes, the ears and the heart of the Woman, who approached with rapture, and swore within herself that since she saw her last, the fair one had grown fairer than ever. With eager gladness, from a distance, she expressed her reverence and admiration for the lovely maiden. "What a happi-

[17] If aught can overspan the Time-River, then what but Understanding, but Thought, in its moment of plenitude, in its favourable noon-momen ?—D. T.

ness to see you! what a Heaven does your presence spread around you! How charmingly the harp is leaning on your bosom, how softly your arms surround it, how it seems as if longing to be near you, and how it sounds so meekly under the touch of your slim fingers! Thrice-happy youth, to whom it were permitted to be there!"

So speaking she approached; the fair Lily raised her eyes; let her hands drop from the harp, and answered: "Trouble me not with untimely praise; I feel my misery but the more deeply. Look here, at my feet lies the poor Canary-bird, which used so beautifully to accompany my singing; it would sit upon my harp, and was trained not to touch me; but today, while I, refreshed by sleep, was raising a peaceful morning hymn, and my little singer was pouring forth his harmonious tones more gaily than ever, a Hawk darts over my head; the poor little creature, in affright, takes refuge in my bosom, and I feel the last palpitations of its departing life. The plundering Hawk indeed was caught by my look, and fluttered fainting down into the water; but what can his punishment avail me? my darling is dead, and his grave will but increase the mournful bushes of my garden."

"Take courage, fairest Lily!" cried the Woman, wiping off a tear, which the story of the hapless maiden had called into her eyes; "compose yourself; my old man bids me tell you to moderate your lamenting, to look upon the greatest misfortune as a forerunner of the greatest happiness, for the time is at hand; and truly," continued she, "the world is going strangely on of late. Do but look at my hand, how black it is! As I live and breathe, it is grown far smaller: I must hasten, before it vanish altogether! Why did I engage to do the Will-o'-wisps a service, why did I meet the Giant's shadow, and dip my hand in the River? Could you not afford me a single cabbage, an artichoke and an onion? I would give them to the River, and my hand were white as ever, so that I could almost show it with one of yours."

"Cabbages and onions thou mayest still find; but artichokes thou wilt search for in vain. No plant in my garden bears either flowers or fruit; but every twig that I break, and plant upon the grave of a favourite, grows green straightway, and shoots up in fair boughs. All these groups, these bushes, these groves my hard destiny has so raised around me. These pines stretching out like parasols, these obelisks of cypresses, these colossal oaks and beeches, were all little twigs planted by my hand, as mournful memorials in a soil that otherwise is barren."[18]

To this speech the old Woman had paid little heed; she was looking at her hand, which, in presence of the fair Lily, seemed every moment growing blacker and smaller. She was about to snatch her basket and hasten off, when she noticed that the best part of her errand had

[18] In SUPERNATURALISM truly, what is there either of flower or of fruit? Nothing that will (altogether) content the greedy Time-River. Stupendous, funereal sacred groves, 'in a soil that otherwise is barren!'—D. T.

been forgotten. She lifted out the onyx Pug, and set him down, not far from the fair one, in the grass. "My husband," said she, "sends you this memorial; you know that you can make a jewel live by touching it. This pretty faithful dog will certainly afford you much enjoyment; and my grief at losing him is brightened only by the thought that he will be in your possession."

The fair Lily viewed the dainty creature with a pleased and, as it seemed, with an astonished look. "Many signs combine," said she, "that breathe some hope into me: but ah! is it not a natural deception which makes us fancy, when misfortunes crowd upon us, that a better day is near?

"What can these many signs avail me?
My Singer's Death, thy coal-black Hand?
This Dog of Onyx, that can never fail me?
And coming at the Lamp's command?

From human joys removed forever,
With sorrows compassed round I sit:
Is there a Temple at the River?
Is there a Bridge? Alas, not yet!"

The good old dame had listened with impatience to this singing, which the fair Lily accompanied with her harp, in a way that would have charmed any other. She was on the point of taking leave, when the arrival of the green Snake again detained her. The Snake had caught the last lines of the song, and on this matter forthwith began to speak comfort to the fair Lily.

"The prophecy of the Bridge is fulfilled!" cried the Snake: "you may ask this worthy dame how royally the arch looks now. What formerly was untransparent jasper, or agate, allowing but a gleam of light to pass about its edges, is now become transparent precious stone. No beryl is so clear, no emerald so beautiful of hue."

"I wish you joy of it," said Lily; "but you will pardon me if I regard the prophecy as yet unaccomplished. The lofty arch of your bridge can still but admit foot-passengers; and it is promised us that horses and carriages and travellers of every sort shall, at the same moment, cross this bridge in both directions. Is there not something said, too, about pillars, which are to arise of themselves from the waters of the River?"

The old Woman still kept her eyes fixed on her hand; she here interrupted their dialogue, and was taking leave. "Wait a moment," said the fair Lily, "and carry my little bird with you. Bid the Lamp change it into topaz; I will enliven it by my touch; with your good Mops it shall form my dearest pastime: but hasten, hasten; for, at sunset, intolerable putrefaction will fasten on the hapless bird, and tear asunder the fair combination of its form forever."

The old Woman laid the little corpse, wrapped in soft leaves, into her basket, and hastened away.

"However it may be," said the Snake, recommencing their interrupted dialogue, "the Temple is built."

"But it is not at the River," said the fair one.

"It is yet resting in the depths of the Earth," said the Snake; "I have seen the Kings and conversed with them."

"But when will they arise?" inquired Lily.

The Snake replied: "I heard resounding in the Temple these deep words, *The time is at hand.*"

A pleasing cheerfulness spread over the fair Lily's face: "'Tis the second time," said she, "that I have heard these happy words today: when will the day come for me to hear them thrice?"

She arose, and immediately there came a lovely maiden from the grove, and took away her harp. Another followed her, and folded-up the fine carved ivory stool, on which the fair one had been sitting, and put the silvery cushion under her arm. A third then made her appearance, with a large parasol worked with pearls; and looked whether Lily would require her in walking. These three maidens were beyond expression beautiful; and yet their beauty but exalted that of Lily, for it was plain to every one that they could never be compared to her.[19]

Meanwhile the fair one had been looking, with a satisfied aspect, at the strange onyx Mops. She bent down and touched him, and that instant he started up. Gaily he looked around, ran hither and thither, and at last, in his kindest manner, hastened to salute his benefactress. She took him in her arms, and pressed him to her. "Cold as thou art," cried she, "and though but a half-life works in thee, thou art welcome to me; tenderly will I love thee, prettily will I play with thee, softly caress thee, and firmly press thee to my bosom." She then let him go, chased him from her, called him back, and played so daintily with him, and ran about so gaily and so innocently with him on the grass, that with new rapture you viewed and participated in her joy, as a little while ago her sorrow had attuned every heart to sympathy.

This cheerfulness, these graceful sports were interrupted by the entrance of the woful Youth. He stepped forward, in his former guise and aspect; save that the heat of the day appeared to have fatigued him still more, and in the presence of his mistress he grew paler every moment. He bore upon his hand a Hawk, which was sitting quiet as a dove, with its body shrunk, and its wings drooping.

"It is not kind in thee," cried Lily to him, "to bring that hateful thing before my eyes, the monster, which today has killed my little singer."

"Blame not the unhappy bird!" replied the Youth; "rather blame thyself and thy destiny; and leave me to keep beside me the companion of my woe."

[19] Who are these three? Faith, Hope and Charity, or others of that kin?—D. T. Faith, Hope and Fiddlestick!—O. Y.

Meanwhile Mops ceased not teasing the fair Lily; and she replied to her transparent favourite, with friendly gestures. She clapped her hands to scare him off; then ran, to entice him after her. She tried to get him when he fled, and she chased him away when he attempted to press near her. The Youth looked on in silence, with increasing anger; but at last, when she took the odious beast, which seemed to him unutterably ugly, on her arm, pressed it to her white bosom, and kissed its black snout with her heavenly lips, his patience altogether failed him, and full of desperation he exclaimed: "Must I, who by a baleful fate exist beside thee, perhaps to the end, in an absent presence; who by thee have lost my all, my very self; must I see before my eyes, that so unnatural a monster can charm thee into gladness, can awaken thy attachment, and enjoy thy embrace? Shall I any longer keep wandering to and fro, measuring my dreary course to that side of the River and to this? No, there is still a spark of the old heroic spirit sleeping in my bosom; let it start this instant into its expiring flame! If stones may rest in thy bosom, let me be changed to stone; if thy touch kills, I will die by thy hands."

So saying he made a violent movement; the Hawk flew from his finger, but he himself rushed towards the fair one; she held out her hands to keep him off, and touched him only the sooner. Consciousness forsook him; and she felt with horror the beloved burden lying on her bosom. With a shriek she started back, and the gentle Youth sank lifeless from her arms upon the ground.

The misery had happened! The sweet Lily stood motionless gazing on the corpse. Her heart seemed to pause in her bosom; and her eyes were without tears. In vain did Mops try to gain from her any kindly gesture; with her friend, the world for her was all dead as the grave. Her silent despair did not look round for help; she knew not of any help.

On the other hand, the Snake bestirred herself the more actively; she seemed to meditate deliverance; and in fact her strange movements served at least to keep away, for a little, the immediate consequences of the mischief. With her limber body, she formed a wide circle round the corpse, and seizing the end of her tail between her teeth, she lay quite still.

Ere long one of Lily's fair waiting-maids appeared; brought the ivory folding-stool, and with friendly beckoning constrained her mistress to sit down on it. Soon afterwards there came a second; she had in her hand a fire-coloured veil, with which she rather decorated than concealed the fair Lily's head. The third handed her the harp, and scarcely had she drawn the gorgeous instrument towards her, and struck some tones from its strings, when the first maid returned with a clear round mirror; took her station opposite the fair one; caught her looks in the glass, and threw back to her the loveliest image that was to be found in

Nature.[20] Sorrow heightened her beauty, the veil her charms, the harp her grace; and deeply as you wished to see her mournful situation altered, not less deeply did you wish to keep her image, as she now looked, forever present with you.

With a still look at the mirror, she touched the harp; now melting tones proceeded from the strings, now her pain seemed to mount, and the music in strong notes responded to her woe; sometimes she opened her lips to sing, but her voice failed her; and ere long her sorrow melted into tears, two maidens caught her helpfully in their arms, the harp sank from her bosom, scarcely could the quick servant snatch the instrument and carry it aside.

"Who gets us the Man with the Lamp, before the Sun set?" hissed the Snake faintly, but audibly: the maids looked at one another, and Lily's tears fell faster. At this moment came the Woman with the Basket, panting and altogether breathless. "I am lost, and maimed for life!" cried she; "see how my hand is almost vanished; neither Ferryman nor Giant would take me over, because I am the River's debtor; in vain did I promise hundreds of cabbages and hundreds of onions; they will take no more than three; and no artichoke is now to be found in all this quarter."

"Forget your own care," said the Snake, "and try to bring help here; perhaps it may come to yourself also. Haste with your utmost speed to seek the Will-o'-wisps; it is too light for you to see them, but perhaps you will hear them laughing and hopping to and fro. If they be speedy, they may cross upon the Giant's shadow, and seek the Man with the Lamp, and send him to us."

The Woman hurried off at her quickest pace, and the Snake seemed expecting as impatiently as Lily the return of the Flames. Alas! the beam of the sinking Sun was already gilding only the highest summits of the trees in the thicket, and long shadows were stretching over lake and meadow; the Snake hitched up and down impatiently, and Lily dissolved in tears.

In this extreme need, the Snake kept looking round on all sides; for she was afraid every moment that the Sun would set, and corruption penetrate the magic circle, and the fair youth immediately moulder away. At last she noticed sailing high in the air, with purple red feathers, the Prince's Hawk, whose breast was catching the last beams of the Sun. She shook herself for joy at this good omen; nor was she deceived; for shortly afterwards the Man with the Lamp was seen gliding towards

[20] Does not man's soul *rest* by Faith, and look in the *mirror* of Faith? Does not Hope 'decorate rather than conceal'? Is not Charity (Love) the beginning of *music*?—Behold too, how the Serpent, in this great hour, has made herself a Serpent-of-Eternity; and (even as genuine THOUGHT, in our age, has to do for so much) preserves the seeming-dead within her folds, that suspended animation issue not in noisome, horrible, irrevocable dissolution —D. T.

them across the Lake, fast and smoothly, as if he had been travelling on skates.

The Snake did not change her posture; but Lily rose and called to him: "What good spirit sends thee, at the moment when we were desiring thee, and needing thee, so much?"

"The spirit of my Lamp," replied the Man, "has impelled me, and the Hawk has conducted me. My Lamp sparkles when I am needed, and I just look about me in the sky for a signal; some bird or meteor points to the quarter towards which I am to turn. Be calm, fairest Maiden! Whether I can help, I know not; an individual helps not, but he who combines himself with many at the proper hour. We will postpone the evil, and keep hoping. Hold thy circle fast," continued he, turning to the Snake; then set himself upon a hillock beside her, and illuminated the dead body. "Bring the little Bird[21] hither too, and lay it in the circle!" The maidens took the little corpse from the basket, which the old Woman had left standing, and did as he directed.

Meanwhile the Sun had set; and as the darkness increased, not only the Snake and the old Man's Lamp began shining in their fashion, but also Lily's veil gave-out a soft light, which gracefully tinged, as with a meek dawning red, her pale cheeks and her white robe. The party looked at one another, silently reflecting; care and sorrow were mitigated by a sure hope.

It was no unpleasing entrance, therefore, that the Woman made, attended by the two gay Flames, which in truth appeared to have been very lavish in the interim, for they had again become extremely meagre; yet they only bore themselves the more prettily for that, towards Lily and the other ladies. With great tact and expressiveness, they said a multitude of rather common things to these fair persons; and declared themselves particularly ravished by the charm which the gleaming veil[22] spread over Lily and her attendants. The ladies modestly cast down their eyes, and the praise of their beauty made them really beautiful. All were peaceful and calm, except the old Woman. In spite of the assurance of her husband, that her hand could diminish no farther, while the Lamp shone on it, she asserted more than once, that if things went on thus, before midnight this noble member would have utterly vanished.

The Man with the Lamp had listened attentively to the conversation of the Lights; and was gratified that Lily had been cheered, in some measure, and amused by it. And, in truth, midnight had arrived they knew not how. The old Man looked to the stars, and then began

[21] What are the Hawk and this Canary-bird, which here prove so destructive to one another? Ministering servants, implements, of these two divided Halves of the Human Soul; name them I will not; more is not written.—D. T.

[22] Have not your march-of-intellect Literators always expressed themselves particularly ravished with any glitter from a veil of *Hope;* with 'progress of the species,' and the like?—D. T.

speaking: "We are assembled at the propitious hour; let each perform his task, let each do his duty; and a universal happiness will swallow-up our individual sorrows, as a universal grief consumes individual joys."

At these words arose a wondrous hubbub;[23] for all the persons in the party spoke aloud, each for himself, declaring what they had to do; only the three maids were silent; one of them had fallen asleep beside the harp, another near the parasol, the third by the stool; and you could not blame them much, for it was late. The Fiery Youths, after some passing compliments which they devoted to the waiting-maids, had turned their sole attention to the Princess, as alone worthy of exclusive homage.

"Take the mirror," said the Man to the Hawk; "and with the first sunbeam illuminate the three sleepers, and awake them, with light reflected from above."

The Snake now began to move; she loosened her circle, and rolled slowly, in large rings, forward to the River. The two Will-o'-wisps followed with a solemn air: you would have taken them for the most serious Flames in Nature. The old Woman and her husband seized the Basket, whose mild light they had scarcely observed till now; they lifted it at both sides, and it grew still larger and more luminous; they lifted the body of the Youth into it, laying the Canary-bird upon his breast; the Basket rose into the air and hovered above the old Woman's head, and she followed the Will-o'-wisps on foot. The fair Lily took Mops on her arm, and followed the Woman; the Man with the Lamp concluded the procession; and the scene was curiously illuminated by these many lights.

But it was with no small wonder that the party saw, when they approached the River, a glorious arch mount over it, by which the helpful Snake was affording them a glittering path. If by day they had admired the beautiful transparent precious stones, of which the Bridge seemed formed; by night they were astonished at its gleaming brilliancy. On the upper side the clear circle marked itself sharp against the dark sky, but below, vivid beams were darting to the centre, and exhibiting the airy firmness of the edifice. The procession slowly moved across it; and the Ferryman, who saw it from his hut afar off, considered with astonishment the gleaming circle, and the strange lights which were passing over it.[24]

No sooner had they reached the other shore, than the arch began,

[23] Too true: dost thou not hear it, reader? In this our Revolutionary 'twelfth hour of the night,' all persons speak aloud (some of them by cannon and drums!), 'declaring what they have to do;' and Faith, Hope and Charity (after a few passing compliments from the Belles-Lettres Department), thou seest, have *fallen asleep!*—D. T.

[24] Well he might, worthy old man; as Pope Pius, for example, did, when he lived in Fontainebleau!—D. T. As our Bishops, when voting for the Reform Bill?—O. Y.

in its usual way, to swag up and down, and with a wavy motion to approach the water. The Snake then came on land, the Basket placed itself upon the ground, and the Snake again drew her circle round it. The old Man stooped towards her, and said: "What hast thou resolved on?"

"To sacrifice myself rather than be sacrificed," replied the Snake; "promise me that thou wilt leave no stone on shore."

The old Man promised; then addressing Lily: "Touch the Snake," said he, "with thy left hand, and thy lover with thy right." Lily knelt, and touched the Snake and the Prince's body. The latter in the instant seemed to come to life; he moved in the Basket, nay he raised himself into a sitting posture; Lily was about to clasp him; but the old Man held her back, and himself assisted the Youth to rise, and led him forth from the Basket and the circle.

The Prince was standing; the Canary-bird was fluttering on his shoulder; there was life again in both of them, but the spirit had not yet returned; the fair Youth's eyes were open, yet he did not see, at least he seemed to look on all without participation. Scarcely had their admiration of this incident a little calmed, when they observed how strangely it had fared in the mean while with the Snake. Her fair taper body had crumbled into thousands and thousands of shining jewels: the old Woman reaching at her Basket had chanced to come against the circle; and of the shape or structure of the Snake there was now nothing to be seen, only a bright ring of luminous jewels was lying in the grass.[25]

The old Man forthwith set himself to gather the stones into the Basket; a task in which his wife assisted him. They next carried the Basket to an elevated point on the bank; and here the man threw its whole lading, not without contradiction from the fair one and his wife, who would gladly have retained some part of it, down into the River. Like gleaming twinkling stars the stones floated down with the waves; and you could not say whether they lost themselves in the distance, or sank to the bottom.

"Gentlemen," said he with the Lamp, in a respectful tone to the Lights, "I will now show you the way, and open you the passage; but you will do us an essential service, if you please to unbolt the door, by which the Sanctuary must be entered at present, and which none but you can unfasten."

The Lights made a stately bow of assent, and kept their place. The old Man of the Lamp went foremost into the rock, which opened at his presence; the Youth followed him, as if mechanically; silent

[25] So! Your Logics, Mechanical Philosophies, Politics, Sciences, your whole modern System of THOUGHT, is to decease; and old ENDEAVOUR, 'grasping at her basket,' shall 'come against' the inanimate remains, and 'only a bright ring of luminous jewels' shall be left there! Mark well, however, what next becomes of it.—D. T.

and uncertain, Lily kept at some distance from him; the old Woman would not be left, and stretched-out her hand, that the light of her husband's Lamp might still fall upon it. The rear was closed by the two Will-o'-wisps, who bent the peaks of their flames towards one another, and appeared to be engaged in conversation.

They had not gone far till the procession halted in front of a large brazen door, the leaves of which were bolted with a golden lock. The Man now called upon the Lights to advance; who required small entreaty, and with their pointed flames soon ate both bar and lock.

The brass gave a loud clang, as the doors sprang suddenly asunder; and the stately figures of the Kings appeared within the Sanctuary, illuminated by the entering Lights. All bowed before these dread sovereigns, especially the Flames made a profusion of the daintiest reverences.

After a pause, the gold King asked: "Whence come ye?" "From the world," said the old Man.—"Whither go ye?" said the silver King. "Into the world," replied the Man.—"What would ye with us?" cried the brazen King. "Accompany you," replied the Man.

The composite King was about to speak, when the gold one addressed the Lights, who had got too near him: "Take yourselves away from me, my metal was not made for you." Thereupon they turned to the silver King, and clasped themselves about him; and his robe glittered beautifully in their yellow brightness. "You are welcome," said he, "but I cannot feed you; satisfy yourselves elsewhere, and bring me your light." They removed; and gliding past the brazen King, who did not seem to notice them, they fixed on the compounded King. "Who will govern the world?" cried he, with a broken voice. "He who stands upon his feet," replied the old Man.—"I am he," said the mixed King. "We shall see," replied the Man; "for the time is at hand."

The fair Lily fell upon the old Man's neck, and kissed him cordially. "Holy Sage!" cried she, "a thousand times I thank thee; for I hear that fateful word the third time." She had scarcely spoken, when she clasped the old Man still faster; for the ground began to move beneath them; the Youth and the old Woman also held by one another; the Lights alone did not regard it.

You could feel plainly that the whole temple was in motion; as a ship that softly glides away from the harbour, when her anchors are lifted; the depths of the Earth seemed to open for the Building as it went along. It struck on nothing; no rock came in its way.

For a few instants, a small rain seemed to drizzle from the opening of the dome; the old Man held the fair Lily fast, and said to her: "We are now beneath the River; we shall soon be at the mark." Ere long they thought the Temple made a halt; but they were in an error; it was mounting upwards.

And now a strange uproar rose above their heads. Planks and

beams in disordered combination now came pressing and crashing in at the opening of the dome. Lily and the Woman started to a side; the Man with the Lamp laid hold of the Youth, and kept standing still. The little cottage of the Ferryman,—for it was this which the Temple in ascending had severed from the ground and carried up with it,—sank gradually down, and covered the old Man and the Youth.

The women screamed aloud, and the Temple shook, like a ship running unexpectedly aground. In sorrowful perplexity, the Princess and her old attendant wandered round the cottage in the dawn; the door was bolted, and to their knocking no one answered. They knocked more loudly, and were not a little struck, when at length the wood began to ring. By virtue of the Lamp locked up in it, the hut had been converted from the inside to the outside into solid silver. Ere long too its form changed; for the noble metal shook aside the accidental shape of planks, posts and beams, and stretched itself out into a noble case of beaten ornamented workmanship. Thus a fair little temple stood erected in the middle of the large one; or if you will, an Altar worthy of the Temple.[26]

By a staircase which ascended from within, the noble Youth now mounted aloft, lighted by the old Man with the Lamp; and, as it seemed, supported by another, who advanced in a white short robe, with a silver rudder in his hand; and was soon recognised as the Ferryman, the former possessor of the cottage.

The fair Lily mounted the outer steps, which led from the floor of the Temple to the Altar; but she was still obliged to keep herself apart from her Lover. The old Woman, whose hand in the absence of the Lamp had grown still smaller, cried: "Am I, then, to be unhappy after all? Among so many miracles, can there be nothing done to save my hand?" Her husband pointed to the open door, and said to her: "See, the day is breaking; haste, bathe thyself in the River." —"What an advice!" cried she; "it will make me all black; it will make me vanish altogether; for my debt is not yet paid."—"Go," said the Man, "and do as I advise thee; all debts are now paid."

The old Woman hastened away; and at that moment appeared the rising Sun, upon the rim of the dome. The old Man stept between the Virgin and the Youth, and cried with a loud voice: "There are three which have rule on Earth; Wisdom, Appearance and Strength." At the first word, the gold King rose; at the second, the silver one; and at the third, the brass King slowly rose, while the mixed King on a sudden very awkwardly plumped down.[27]

[26] Good! The old Church, shaken down 'in disordered combination,' is admitted, in this way, into the new perennial Temple of the Future; and, clarified into enduring silver by the Lamp, becomes an Altar worthy to stand there. The Ferryman too is not forgotten.—D. T.

[27] Dost thou note this, O reader; and look back with new clearness on former things? A gold King, a silver and a brazen King: WISDOM, dig-

Whoever noticed him could scarcely keep from laughing, solemn as the moment was; for he was not sitting, he was not lying, he was not leaning, but shapelessly sunk together.[28]

The Lights,[29] who till now had been employed upon him, drew to a side; they appeared, although pale in the morning radiance, yet once more well-fed, and in good burning condition; with their peaked tongues, they had dexterously licked-out the gold veins of the colossal figure to its very heart. The irregular vacuities which this occasioned had continued empty for a time, and the figure had maintained its standing posture. But when at last the very tenderest filaments were eaten out, the image crashed suddenly together; and that, alas, in the very parts which continue unaltered when one sits down; whereas the limbs, which should have bent, sprawled themselves out unbowed and stiff. Whoever *could* not laugh was obliged to turn away his eyes; this miserable shape and no-shape was offensive to behold.

The Man with the Lamp now led the handsome Youth, who still kept gazing vacantly before him, down from the Altar, and straight to the brazen King. At the feet of this mighty Potentate lay a sword in a brazen sheath. The young man girt it round him. "The sword on the left, the right free!" cried the brazen voice. They next proceeded to the silver King; he bent his sceptre to the Youth; the latter seized it with his left hand, and the King in a pleasing voice said: "Feed the sheep!" On turning to the golden King, he stooped with gestures of paternal blessing, and pressing his oaken garland on the young man's head, said: "Understand what is highest!"

During this progress, the old Man had carefully observed the Prince. After girding-on the sword, his breast swelled, his arms waved, and his feet trod firmer; when he took the sceptre in his hand, his strength appeared to soften, and by an unspeakable charm to become still more subduing; but as the oaken garland came to deck his hair, his features kindled, his eyes gleamed with inexpressible spirit, and the first word of his mouth was "Lily!"

"Dearest Lily!" cried he, hastening up the silver stairs to her, for she had viewed his progress from the pinnacle of the Altar; "Dearest Lily! what more precious can a man, equipt with all, desire for himself than innocence and the still affection which thy bosom brings me? O my friend!" continued he turning to the old Man, and looking at the three statues; "glorious and secure is the kingdom of our fathers;

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nified APPEARANCE, STRENGTH; these three harmoniously united bear rule; *dis*harmoniously cobbled together in sham union (as in the foolish composite King of our foolish 'transition era'), they, once the gold (or wisdom) is *all* out of them, 'very awkwardly plump down.'—D. T.

[28] As, for example, does not Charles X. (one of the poor fractional composite Realities emblemed herein) rest, even now, 'shapelessly enough sunk together,' at Holyrood, in the city of Edinburgh?—D. T.

[29] March-of-intellect Lights were well capable of such a thing.—D. T.

but thou hast forgotten the fourth power, which rules the world, earlier, more universally, more certainly, the power of Love." With these words, he fell upon the lovely maiden's neck; she had cast away her veil, and her cheeks were tinged with the fairest, most imperishable red.

Here the old Man said with a smile: "Love does not rule; but it trains,[30] and that is more."

Amid this solemnity, this happiness and rapture, no one had observed that it was now broad day; and all at once, on looking through the open portal, a crowd of altogether unexpected objects met the eye. A large space surrounded with pillars formed the fore-court, at the end of which was seen a broad and stately Bridge stretching with many arches across the River. It was furnished, on both sides, with commodious and magnificent colonnades for foot-travellers, many thousands of whom were already there, busily passing this way or that. The broad pavement in the centre was thronged with herds and mules, with horsemen and carriages, flowing like two streams, on their several sides, and neither interrupting the other. All admired the splendour and convenience of the structure; and the new King and his Spouse were delighted with the motion and activity of this great people, as they were already happy in their own mutual love.

"Remember the Snake in honour," said the Man with the Lamp; "thou owest her thy life; thy people owe her the Bridge, by which these neighbouring banks are now animated and combined into one land. Those swimming and shining jewels, the remains of her sacrificed body, are the piers of this royal bridge; upon these she has built and will maintain herself."[31]

The party were about to ask some explanation of this strange mystery, when there entered four lovely maidens at the portal of the Temple. By the Harp, the Parasol, and the Folding-stool, it was not difficult to recognise the waiting-maids of Lily; but the fourth, more beautiful than any of the rest, was an unknown fair one, and in sisterly sportfulness she hastened with them through the Temple, and mounted the steps of the Altar.[32]

"Wilt thou have better trust in me another time, good wife?" said the Man with the Lamp to the fair one: "Well for thee, and every living thing that bathes this morning in the River!"

The renewed and beautified old Woman, of whose former shape no

[30] It fashions (*bildet*), or educates.—O. Y.

[31] Honour to her indeed! The Mechanical Philosophy, though dead, has not died and lived in vain; but her works are there: 'upon these *she*' (THOUGHT, new-born, in glorified shape) 'has built herself and will maintain herself;' and the Natural and Supernatural shall henceforth, thereby, be one.—D. T.

[32] Mark what comes of bathing in the TIME-River, at the entrance of a New Era!—D. T.

trace remained, embraced with young eager arms the Man with the Lamp, who kindly received her caresses. "If I am too old for thee," said he, smiling, "thou mayest choose another husband today; from this hour no marriage is of force, which is not contracted anew."

"Dost thou not know, then," answered she, "that thou too art grown younger?"—"It delights me if to thy young eyes I seem a handsome youth: I take thy hand anew, and am well content to live with thee another thousand years."[33]

The Queen welcomed her new friend, and went down with her into the interior of the Altar, while the King stood between his two men, looking towards the Bridge, and attentively contemplating the busy tumult of the people.

But his satisfaction did not last; for ere long he saw an object which excited his displeasure. The great Giant, who appeared not yet to have awoke completely from his morning sleep, came stumbling along the Bridge, producing great confusion all around him. As usual, he had risen stupefied with sleep, and had meant to bathe in the well-known bay of the River; instead of which he found firm land, and plunged upon the broad pavement of the Bridge. Yet although he reeled into the midst of men and cattle in the clumsiest way, his presence, wondered at by all, was felt by none; but as the sunshine came into his eyes, and he raised his hands to rub them, the shadows of his monstrous fists moved to and fro behind him with such force and awkwardness, that men and beasts were heaped together in great masses, were hurt by such rude contact, and in danger of being pitched into the River.[34]

The King, as he saw this mischief, grasped with an involuntary movement at his sword; but he bethought himself, and looked calmly at his sceptre, then at the Lamp and the Rudder of his attendants. "I guess thy thoughts," said the Man with the Lamp; "but we and our gifts are powerless against this powerless monster. Be calm! He is doing hurt for the last time, and happily his shadow is not turned to us."

Meanwhile the Giant was approaching nearer; in astonishment at what he saw with open eyes, he had dropt his hands; he was now doing no injury, and came staring and agape into the fore-court.

He was walking straight to the door of the Temple, when all at once in the middle of the court, he halted, and was fixed to the ground. He stood there like a strong colossal statue, of reddish glittering stone, and his shadow pointed out the hours,[35] which were marked in a circle on the floor around him, not in numbers, but in noble and expressive emblems.

[33] And so REASON and ENDEAVOUR being once more married, and in the honeymoon, need we wish them joy?—D. T.

[34] Thou rememberest the *Catholic Relief Bill;* witnessest the *Irish Education Bill?* Hast heard, five hundred times, that the 'Church' was 'in Danger,' and now at length believest it?—D. T. Is D. T. of the Fourth Estate, and Popish-Infidel, then?—O. Y.

[35] Bravo!—D. T.

Much delighted was the King to see the monster's shadow turned to some useful purpose; much astonished was the Queen, who, on mounting from within the Altar, decked in royal pomp, with her virgins, first noticed the huge figure, which almost closed the prospect from the Temple to the Bridge.

Meanwhile the people had crowded after the Giant, as he ceased to move; they were walking round him, wondering at his metamorphosis. From him they turned to the Temple, which they now first appeared to notice,[36] and pressed towards the door.

At this instant the Hawk with the mirror soared aloft above the dome; caught the light of the Sun, and reflected it upon the group, which was standing on the Altar. The King, the Queen, and their attendants, in the dusty concave of the Temple, seemed illuminated by a heavenly splendour, and the people fell upon their faces. When the crowd had recovered and risen, the King with his followers had descended into the Altar, to proceed by secret passages into his palace; and the multitude dispersed about the Temple to content their curiosity. The three Kings that were standing erect they viewed with astonishment and reverence; but the more eager were they to discover what mass it could be that was hid behind the hangings, in the fourth niche; for by some hand or another, charitable decency had spread over the resting-place of the fallen King a gorgeous curtain, which no eye can penetrate, and no hand may dare to draw aside.

The people would have found no end to their gazing and their admiration, and the crowding multitude would have even suffocated one another in the Temple, had not their attention been again attracted to the open space.

Unexpectedly some gold-pieces, as if falling from the air, came tinkling down upon the marble flags; the nearest passers-by rushed thither to pick them up; the wonder was repeated several times, now here, now there. It is easy to conceive that the shower proceeded from our two retiring Flames, who wished to have a little sport here once more, and were thus gaily spending, ere they went away, the gold which they had licked from the members of the sunken King. The people still ran eagerly about, pressing and pulling one another, even when the gold had ceased to fall. At length they gradually dispersed, and went their way; and to the present hour the Bridge is swarming with travellers, and the Temple is the most frequented on the whole Earth.[37]

[36] Now first; when the beast of a SUPERSTITION-Giant has got his quietus. Right!—D. T.

[37] It is the Temple of the whole civilised Earth. Finally, may I tak leave to consider this *Mährchen* as the deepest Poem of its sort in existence as the only true Prophecy emitted for who knows how many centuries?—D. T. Certainly: England is a free country.—O. Y.

No. 2.

NOVELLE.[1]

BY GOETHE.

[1832.]

THE spacious courts of the Prince's Castle were still veiled in thick mists of an autumnal morning; through which veil, meanwhile, as it melted into clearness, you could more or less discern the whole Hunter-company, on horseback and on foot, all busily astir. The hasty occupations of the nearest were distinguishable: there was lengthening, shortening of stirrup-leathers; there was handing of rifles and shot-pouches, there was putting of game-bags to rights; while the hounds, impatient in their leashes, threatened to drag their keepers off with them. Here and there, too, a horse showed spirit more than enough; driven-on by its fiery nature, or excited by the spur of its rider, who even now in the half-dusk could not repress a certain self-complacent wish to exhibit himself. All waited, however, on the Prince, who, taking leave of his young Consort, was now delaying too long.

United a short while ago, they already felt the happiness of consentaneous dispositions; both were of active vivid character; each willingly participated in the tastes and endeavours of the other. The Prince's father had already, in his time, discerned and improved the season when it became evident that all members of the commonwealth should pass their days in equal industry; should all, in equal working and producing, each in his kind, first earn, and then enjoy.

How well this had prospered was visible in these very days, when the chief market was a-holding, which you might well enough have named a fair. The Prince yestereven had led his Princess on horseback through the tumult of the heaped-up wares; and pointed out to her how, on this spot, the Mountain region met the Plain country in profitable barter: he could here, with the objects before him, awaken her attention to the various industry of his Land.

If the Prince at this time occupied himself and his servants almost exclusively with these pressing concerns, and in particular worked incessantly with his Finance-minister, yet would the Huntmaster too have his right; on whose pleading, the temptation could not be resisted to undertake, in this choice autumn weather, a Hunt that had already been postponed; and so for the household itself, and for the many stranger visitants, prepare a peculiar and singular festivity.

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 34.

The Princess stayed behind with reluctance: but it was proposed to push far into the Mountains, and stir-up the peaceable inhabitants of the forests there with an unexpected invasion.

At parting, her lord failed not to propose a ride for her, with Friedrich, the Prince-Uncle, as escort: "I will leave thee," said he, "our Honorio too, as Equerry and Page, who will manage all." In pursuance of which words, he, in descending, gave to a handsome young man the needful injunctions; and soon thereafter disappeared with guests and train.

The Princess, who had waved her handkerchief to her husband while still down in the court, now retired to the back apartments, which commanded a free prospect towards the Mountains; and so much the lovelier, as the Castle itself stood on a sort of elevation, and thus, behind as well as before, afforded manifold magnificent views. She found the fine telescope still in the position where they had left it yestereven, when amusing themselves over bush and hill and forest-summit, with the lofty ruins of the primeval Stammburg, or Family Tower; which in the clearness of evening stood out noteworthy, as at that hour with its great light-and-shade masses, the best aspect of so venerable a memorial of old time was to be had. This morning too, with the approximating glasses, might be beautifully seen the autumnal tinge of the trees, many in kind and number, which had struggled up through the masonry, unhindered and undisturbed during long years. The fair dame, however, directed the tube somewhat lower, to a waste stony flat, over which the Hunting-train was to pass: she waited the moment with patience, and was not disappointed; for with the clearness and magnifying power of the instrument her glancing eyes plainly distinguished the Prince and the Head-Equerry; nay she forbore not again to wave her handkerchief, as some momentary pause and looking-back was fancied perhaps, rather than observed.

Prince-Uncle, Friedrich by name, now with announcement entered, attended by his Painter, who carried a large portfolio under his arm. "Dear Cousin," said the hale old gentleman, "we here present you with the Views of the Stammburg, taken on various sides to show how the mighty Pile, warred-on and warring, has from old time fronted the year and its weather; how here and there its wall had to yield, here and there rush down into waste ruins. However, we have now done much to make the wild mass accessible; for more there wants not to set every traveller, every visitor, into astonishment, into admiration."

As the Prince now exhibited the separate leaves, he continued: "Here where, advancing up the hollow-way, through the outer ring-walls, you reach the Fortress proper, rises against us a rock, the firmest of the whole mountain; on this there stands a tower built,—yet where Nature leaves off, and Art and Handicraft begin, no one can distinguish. Farther you perceive, sidewards, walls abutting on it, and donjons terrace-wise stretching down. But I speak wrong; for, to the eye, it is

but a wood that encircles that old summit: these hundred-and-fifty years no axe has sounded there, and the massiest stems have on all sides sprung up; wherever you press inwards to the walls, the smooth maple, the rough oak, the taper pine, with trunk and roots oppose you; round these we have to wind, and pick our footsteps with skill. Do but look how artfully our Master has brought the character of it on paper; how the roots and stems, the species of each distinguishable, twist themselves among the masonry, and the huge boughs come looping through the holes. It is a wilderness like no other; an accidentally unique locality, where ancient traces of the long-vanished power of Man, and the ever-living, ever-working power of Nature show themselves in the most earnest conflict."

Exhibiting another leaf, he went on: "What say you now to the Castle-court, which, become inaccessible by the falling-in of the old gate-tower, had for immemorial time been trodden by no foot? We sought to get at it by a side; have pierced through walls, blasted vaults asunder, and so provided a convenient but secret way. Inside it needed no clearance; here stretches a flat rock-summit, smoothed by Nature: but yet strong trees have, in spots, found luck and opportunity for rooting themselves there; they have softly but decidedly grown up, and now stretch out their boughs into the galleries where the knights once walked to and fro; nay through the doors and windows into the vaulted halls; out of which we would not drive them: they have even got the mastery, and may keep it. Sweeping away deep strata of leaves, we have found the notablest place, all smoothed, the like of which were perhaps not to be met with in the world.

"After all this, however, it is still to be remarked, and on the spot itself well worth examining, how on the steps that lead up to the main tower, a maple has struck root and fashioned itself to a stout tree, so that you hardly can with difficulty press by it, to mount the battlements and gaze over the unbounded prospect. Yet here too, you linger pleased in the shade; for that tree is it which, high over the whole, wondrously lifts itself into the air.

"Let us thank the brave Artist, then, who so deservingly in various pictures teaches us the whole, even as if we saw it: he has spent the fairest hours of the day and of the season therein, and for weeks long kept moving about these scenes. Here in this corner has there been, for him and the warder we gave him, a pleasant little dwelling fitted up. You could not think, my Best, what a lovely outlook into the country, into court and walls, he has got there. But now when all is once in outline, so pure, so characteristic, he may finish it down here at his ease. With these pictures we will decorate our garden-hall; and no one shall recreate his eyes over our regular parterres, our groves and shady walks, without wishing himself up there, to follow, in actual sight of the old and of the new, of the stubborn, inflexible, indestructible, and of the fresh, pliant, irresistible, what reflections and comparisons would rise for him."

Honorio entered, with notice that the horses were brought out; then said the Princess, turning to the Uncle: "Let us ride up; and you will show me in reality what you have here set before me in image. Ever since I came among you, I have heard of this undertaking; and now should like, of all things, to see with my own eyes what in the narrative seemed impossible, and in the depicting remains improbable."—"Not yet, my Love," answered the Prince: "What you here saw is what it can become and is becoming; for the present, much in the enterprise stands still amid impediments; Art must first be complete, if Nature is not to shame it."—"Then let us ride at least upwards, were it only to the foot: I have the greatest wish today to look about me far in the world."—"Altogether as you will," replied the Prince.—"Let us ride through the Town, however," continued the Lady, "over the great marketplace, where stands the innumerable crowd of booths, looking like a little city, like a camp. It is as if the wants and occupations of all the families in the land were turned outwards, assembled in this centre, and brought into the light of day: for the attentive observer can descry whatsoever it is that man performs and needs; you fancy, for the moment, there is no money necessary, that all business could here be managed by barter, and so at bottom it is. Since the Prince, last night, set me on these reflections, it is pleasant to consider how here, where Mountain and Plain meet together, both so clearly speak out what they require and wish. For as the highlander can fashion the timber of his woods into a hundred shapes, and mould his iron for all manner of uses, so these others from below come to meet him with most manifold wares, in which often you can hardly discover the material or recognise the aim."

"I am aware," answered the Prince, "that my Nephew turns his utmost care to these things; for specially, on the present occasion, this main point comes to be considered, that one receive more than one gives out: which to manage is, in the long-run, the sum of all Political Economy, as of the smallest private housekeeping. Pardon me, however, my Best: I never like to ride through markets; at every step you are hindered and kept back; and then flames-up in my imagination the monstrous misery which, as it were, burnt itself into my eyes, when I witnessed one such world of wares go off in fire. I had scarcely got to——"

"Let us not lose the bright hours," interrupted the Princess; for the worthy man had already more than once afflicted her with the minute description of that mischance: how he, being on a long journey, resting in the best inn, on the marketplace which was just then swarming with a fair, had gone to bed exceedingly fatigued; and in the nighttime been, by shrieks, and flames rolling up against his lodging, hideously awakened.

The Princess hastened to mount her favourite horse: and led, not through the backgate upwards, but through the foregate downwards,

her reluctant-willing attendant; for who but would gladly have ridden by her side, who but would gladly have followed after her? And so Honorio too had, without regret, stayed back from the otherwise so wished-for Hunt, to be exclusively at her service.

As was to be anticipated, they could only ride through the market step by step: but the fair Lovely one enlivened every stoppage by some sprightly remark; "I repeat my lesson of yesternight," said she, "since Necessity is trying our patience." And in truth, the whole mass of men so crowded about the riders, that their progress was slow. The people gazed with joy at the young dame; and on so many smiling countenances might be read the pleasure they felt to see that the first woman in the land was also the fairest and gracefulest.

Promiscuously mingled stood Mountaineers, who had built their still dwellings amid rocks, firs and spruces; Lowlanders from hills, meadows and leas; craftsmen of the little towns; and what else had all assembled there. After a quiet glance, the Princess remarked to her attendant, how all these, whencesoever they came, had taken more stuff than necessary for their clothes, more cloth and linen, more ribands for trimming. It is as if the women could not be bushy enough, the men not puffy enough, to please themselves.

"We will leave them that," answered the Uncle: "spend his superfluity on what he will, a man is happy in it; happiest when he therewith decks and dizens himself." The fair dame nodded assent.

So had they, by degrees, got upon a clear space, which led out to the suburbs; when, at the end of many small booths and stands, a larger edifice of boards showed itself, which was scarcely glanced at till an ear-lacerating bellow sounded forth from it. The feeding-hour of the wild-beasts, there exhibited, seemed to have come: the Lion let his forest- and desert-voice be heard in all vigour; the horses shuddered, and all had to remark how, in the peaceful ways and workings of the cultivated world, the king of the wilderness so fearfully announced himself. Coming nearer the booth, you could not overlook the variegated colossal pictures representing with violent colours and strong emblems those foreign beasts; to a sight of which the peaceful burgher was to be irresistibly enticed. The grim monstrous tiger was pouncing on a blackamoor, on the point of tearing him in shreds; a lion stood earnest and majestic, as if he saw no prey worthy of him; other wondrous particoloured creatures, beside these mighty ones, deserved less attention.

"As we come back," said the Princess, "we will alight and take a nearer view of these gentry."—"It is strange," observed the Prince, "that man always seeks excitement by Terror. Inside, there, the Tiger lies quite quiet in his cage; and here must he ferociously dart upon a black, that the people may fancy the like is to be seen within: of murder and sudden death, of burning and destruction, there is not enough, but balladsingers must at every corner keep repeating it. Good man

will have himself frightened a little; to feel the better, in secret, how beautiful and laudable it is to draw breath in freedom."

Whatever of apprehensiveness from such bugbear images might have remained, was soon all and wholly effaced, as, issuing through the gate, our party entered on the cheerfulest of scenes. The road led first up the River, as yet but a small current, and bearing only light boats, but which by and by, as a renowned world-stream, would carry forth its name and waters, and enliven distant lands. They proceeded next through well-cultivated fruit-gardens and pleasure-grounds, softly ascending; and by degrees you could look about you, in the now disclosed, much-peopled region; till first a thicket, then a little wood admitted our riders, and the gracefulest localities refreshed and limited their view. A meadow-vale leading upwards, shortly before mown for the second time, velvet-like to look upon, and watered by a brook rushing briskly out copious at once from the uplands above, received them as with welcome; and so they approached a higher freer station; which, on issuing from the wood, after a stiff ascent, they gained; and could now descry, over new clumps of trees, the old Castle, the goal of their pilgrimage, rising in the distance, as pinnacle of the rock and forest. Backwards, again (for never did one mount hither without turning round), they caught, through accidental openings of the high trees, the Prince's Castle, on the left, lightened by the morning sun; the well-built higher quarter of the Town, softened under light smoke-clouds: and so on, rightwards the under Town, the River in several bendings, with its meadows and mills; on the farther side, an extensive fertile region.

Having satisfied themselves with the prospect, or rather, as usually happens when we look round from so high a station, become doubly eager for a wider, less limited view, they rode on, over a broad stony flat, where the mighty Ruin stood fronting them, as a green-crowned summit, a few old trees far down about its foot: they rode along; and so arrived there, just at the steepest, most inaccessible side. Great rocks jutting out from of old, insensible of every change, firm, well-founded, stood clenched together there; and so it towered upwards; what had fallen at intervals lay in huge plates and fragments confusedly heaped, and seemed to forbid the boldest any attempt. But the steep, the precipitous is inviting to youth: to undertake it, to storm and conquer it, is for young limbs an enjoyment. The Princess testified desire for an attempt; Honorio was at her hand; the Prince-Uncle, if easier to satisfy, took it cheerfully, and would show that he too had strength: the horses were to wait below among the trees; our climbers make for a certain point, where a huge projecting rock affords standing-room, and a prospect, which indeed is already passing over into the bird's-eye kind, yet folds itself together there picturesquely enough.

The sun, almost at its meridian, lent the clearest light; the Prince's Castle, with its compartments, main buildings, wings, domes and towers,

lay clear and stately; the upper Town in its whole extent; into the lower also you could conveniently look, nay by the telescope distinguish the booths in the marketplace. So furthersome an instrument Honorio would never leave behind: they looked at the River upwards and downwards; on this side, the mountainous, terrace-like, interrupted expanse, on that the upswelling, fruitful land, alternating in level and low hill; places innumerable; for it was long customary to dispute how many of them were here to be seen.

Over the great expanse lay a cheerful stillness, as is common at noon; when, as the Ancients were wont to say, Pan is asleep, and all Nature holds her breath not to awaken him.

"It is not the first time," said the Princess, "that I, on some such high far-seeing spot, have reflected how Nature, all clear, looks so pure and peaceful, and gives you the impression as if there were nothing contradictory in the world; and yet when you return back into the habitation of man, be it lofty or low, wide or narrow, there is ever somewhat to contend with, to battle with, to smooth and put to rights."

Honorio, who meanwhile was looking through the glass at the Town, exclaimed, "See! see! There is fire in the market!" They looked, and could observe some smoke; the flames were smothered in the daylight. "The fire spreads!" cried he, still looking through the glass: the mischief indeed now became noticeable to the good eyes of the Princess; from time to time you observed a red burst of flame, the smoke mounted aloft; and Prince-Uncle said: "Let us return; that is not good; I always feared I should see that misery a second time." They descended, got back to their horses. "Ride," said the Princess to the Uncle, "fast, but not without a groom: leave me Honorio; we will follow without delay." The Uncle felt the reasonableness, nay necessity of this; and started off down the waste stony slope, at the quickest pace the ground allowed.

As the Princess mounted, Honorio said: "Please your Excellency to ride slow! In the Town as in the Castle, the fire-apparatus is in perfect order; the people, in this unexpected accident, will not lose their presence of mind. Here, moreover, we have bad ground, little stones and short grass; quick riding is unsafe; in any case, before we arrive, the fire will be got under." The Princess did not think so; she observed the smoke spreading, she fancied that she saw a flame flash up, that she heard an explosion; and now in her imagination all the terrific things awoke, which the worthy Uncle's repeated narrative of his experiences in that market-conflagration had too deeply implanted there.

Frightful doubtless had that business been; alarming and impressive enough to leave behind it, painfully through life long, a boding and image of its recurrence,—when in the night-season, on the great booth-covered market-space, a sudden fire had seized booth after booth, before the sleepers in these light huts could be shaken out of deep dreams: the Prince himself, as a wearied stranger arriving only for rest, started from

his sleep, sprang to the window, saw all fearfully illuminated; flame after flame, from the right, from the left, darting through each other, rolls quivering towards him. The houses of the marketplace, reddened in the shine, seemed already glowing; threatened every moment to kindle, and burst forth in fire. Below, the element raged without let; planks cracked, laths crackled; the canvas flew abroad, and its dusky fire-peaked tatters whirled themselves round and aloft,—as if bad spirits, in their own element, with perpetual change of shape, were in capricious dance, devouring one another, and there and yonder, would dart-up out from their penal fire. And then, with wild howls, each saved what was at hand: servants and masters laboured to drag forth bales already seized by the flames; to snatch away yet somewhat from the burning shelves, and pack it into the chests, which too they must at last leave a prey to the hastening flame. How many a one could have prayed but for a moment's pause to the loud-advancing fire; as he looked round for the possibility of some device, and was with all his possessions already seized! On the one side, there burnt and glowed already what, on the other, still stood in dark night. Obstinate characters, will-strong men, grimly fronted the grim foe; and saved much, with loss of their eyebrows and hair.—Alas, all this waste confusion now arose anew before the fair spirit of the Princess; the gay morning prospect was all overclouded, and her eyes darkened; wood and meadow had put on a look of strangeness, of danger.

Entering the peaceful vale, heeding little its refreshing coolness, they were but a few steps onwards from the copious fountain of the brook which flowed by them, when the Princess descried, quite down in the thickets, something singular, which she soon recognised for the tiger: springing on, as she a short while ago had seen him painted, he came towards her; and this image, added to the frightful ones she was already busy with, made the strangest impression. "Fly, your Grace!" cried Honorio, "fly!" She turned her horse towards the steep hill they had just descended. The young man, rushing on towards the monster, drew his pistol and fired when he thought himself near enough; but, alas, without effect; the tiger sprang to a side, the horse faltered, the provoked wild-beast followed his course, upwards straight after the Princess. She galloped, what her horse could, up the steep stony space; scarcely apprehending that so delicate a creature, unused to such exertion, could not hold out. It overdid itself, driven on by the necessitated Princess; it stumbled on the loose gravel of the steep, and again stumbled; and at last fell, after violent efforts, powerless to the ground. The fair dame, resolute and dexterous, failed not instantly to get upon her feet; the horse too rose, but the tiger was approaching; though not with vehement speed; the uneven ground, the sharp stones seemed to damp his impetuosity; and only Honorio flying after him, riding with checked speed along with him, appeared to stimulate and provoke his force anew. Both runners, at the same instant, reached the spot where the Princess was standing by her

horse: the Knight bent himself, fired, and with this second pistol hit the monster through the head, so that it rushed down; and now, stretched out in full length, first clearly disclosed the might and terror whereof only the bodily hull was left lying. Honorio had sprung from his horse; was already kneeling on the beast, quenching its last movements, and held his drawn hanger in his right hand. The youth was beautiful; he had come dashing on, as, in sports of the lance and the ring, the Princess had often seen him do. Even so in the riding-course would his bullet, as he darted by, hit the Turk's-head on the pole, right under the turban in the brow; even so would he, lightly prancing up, prick his naked sabre into the fallen mass, and lift it from the ground. In all such arts he was dexterous and felicitous; both now stood him in good stead.

"Give him the rest," said the Princess: "I fear he will hurt you with his claws."—"Pardon!" answered the youth: "he is already dead enough; and I would not hurt the skin, which next winter shall shine upon your sledge."—"Sport not," said the Princess: "whatsoever of pious feeling dwells in the depth of the heart unfolds itself in such a moment."—"I too," cried Honorio, "was never more pious than even now; and therefore do I think of what is joyfulest: I look at the tiger's fell only as it can attend you to do you pleasure."—"It would forever remind me," said she, "of this fearful moment."—"Yet is it," replied the youth with glowing cheeks, "a more harmless spoil than when the weapons of slain enemies are carried for show before the victor."—"I shall bethink me, at sight of it, of your boldness and cleverness; and need not add, that you may reckon on my thanks and the Prince's favour for your life long. But rise; the beast is clean dead; let us consider what is next: before all things rise!"—"As I am once on my knees," replied the youth, "once in a posture which in other circumstances would have been forbid, let me beg at this moment to receive assurance of the favour, of the grace which you vouchsafe me. I have already asked so often of your high Consort for leave and promotion to go on my travels. He who has the happiness to sit at your table, whom you honour with the privilege to entertain your company, should have seen the world. Travellers stream-in on us from all parts; and when a town, an important spot in any quarter of the world comes in course, the question is sure to be asked of us, Were we ever there? Nobody allows one sense, till one has seen all that: it is as if you had to instruct yourself only for the sake of others."

"Rise!" repeated the Princess: "I were loath to wish or request aught that went against the will of my Husband; however, if I mistake not, the cause why he has restrained you hitherto will soon be at an end. His intention was to see you ripened into a complete self-guided nobleman, to do yourself and him credit in foreign parts, as hitherto at court; and I should think this deed of yours was as good a recommendatory passport as a young man could wish for, to take abroad with him."

That, instead of a youthful joy, a certain mournfulness came over his face, the Princess had not time to observe, nor had he to indulge his emotion; for, in hot haste, up the steep, came a woman, with a boy at her hand, straight to the group so well known to us; and scarcely had Honorio, bethinking him, arisen, when they howling and shrieking cast themselves on the carcass; by which action, as well as by their cleanly, decent, yet particoloured and unusual dress, might be gathered that it was the mistress of this slain creature, and the black-eyed, black-locked boy, holding a flute in his hand, her son; weeping like his mother, less violent, but deeply moved, kneeling beside her.

Now came strong outbreakings of passion from this woman; interrupted indeed, and pulse-wise; a stream of words, leaping like a stream in gushes from rock to rock. A natural language, short and discontinuous, made itself impressive and pathetic: in vain should we attempt translating it into our dialects; the approximate purport of it we must not omit. "They have murdered thee, poor beast! murdered without need! Thou wert tame, and wouldst fain have lain down at rest and waited our coming; for thy footballs were sore, thy claws had no force left. The hot sun to ripen them was wanting. Thou wert the beautifulest of thy kind: who ever saw a kingly tiger so gloriously stretched-out in sleep, as thou here liest, dead, never to rise more? When thou awokest in the early dawn of morning, and openedst thy throat, stretching out thy red tongue, thou wert as if smiling on us; and even when bellowing, thou tookest thy food from the hands of a woman, from the fingers of a child. How long have we gone with thee on thy journeys; how long has thy company been useful and fruitful to us! To us, to us of a very truth, meat came from the eater, and sweetness out of the strong. So will it be no more. Woe! woe!"

She had not done lamenting, when over the smoother part of the Castle Mountain came riders rushing down; soon recognised as the Prince's Hunting-train, himself the foremost. Following their sport, in the backward hills, they had observed the fire-vapours; and fast through dale and ravine, as in fierce chase, taken the shortest path towards this mournful sign. Galloping along the stony vacancy, they stopped and stared at sight of the unexpected group, which in that empty expanse stood out so mark-worthy. After the first recognition, there was silence; some pause of breathing-time, and then what the view itself did not impart, was with brief words explained. So stood the Prince, contemplating the strange unheard-of incident; a circle round him of riders, and followers that had run on foot. What to do was still undetermined; the Prince intent on ordering, executing; when a man pressed forward into the circle; large of stature, particoloured, wondrously apparelled, like wife and child. And now the family, in union, testified their sorrow and astonishment. The man, however, soon restrained himself; bowed in reverent distance before the Prince, and said: "It is not the time for lamenting; alas, my lord and mighty

hunter, the Lion too is loose; hither towards the mountains is he gone: but spare him, have mercy, that he perish not like this good beast."

"The Lion!" said the Prince: "Hast thou the trace of him?"—"Yes, Lord! A peasant down there, who had heedlessly taken shelter on a tree, directed me farther up this way, to the left; but I saw the crowd of men and horses here; anxious for tidings of assistance, I hastened hither."—"So then," commanded the Prince, "draw to the left, Huntsmen; you will load your pieces, go softly to work; if you drive him into the deep woods, it is no matter: but in the end, good man, we shall be obliged to kill your animal: why were you improvident enough to let him loose?"—"The fire broke out," replied he; "we kept quiet and attentive; it spread fast, but at a distance from us; we had water enough for our defence; but a heap of powder blew up, and threw the brands on to us, and over our heads; we were too hasty, and are now ruined people."

The Prince was still busy directing; but for a moment all seemed to pause, as a man was observed hastily springing down from the heights of the old Castle; whom the troop soon recognised for the watchman that had been stationed there to keep the Painter's apartment, while he lodged there and took charge of the workmen. He came running, out of breath, yet in few words soon made known, That the Lion had laid himself down, within the high ring-wall, in the sunshine, at the foot of a large beech, and was behaving quite quietly. With an air of vexation, however, the man concluded: "Why did I take my rifle to town yesternight, to have it cleaned? he had never risen again, the skin had been mine, and I might all my life have had the credit of the thing."

The Prince, whom his military experiences here also stood in stead, for he had before now been in situations where from various sides inevitable evil seemed to threaten, said hereupon: "What surety do you give me that if we spare your Lion, he will not work destruction among us, among my people?"

"This woman and this child," answered the father hastily, "engage to tame him, to keep him peaceable, till I bring up the cage, and then we can carry him back unharmed and without harming any one."

The boy put his flute to his lips; an instrument of the kind once named soft, or sweet flutes; short-beaked like pipes: he, who understood the art, could bring out of it the gracefulest tones. Meanwhile the Prince had inquired of the watchman how the lion came up. "By the hollow-way," answered he, "which is walled-in on both sides, and was formerly the only entrance, and is to be the only one still: two footpaths, which led in elsewhere, we have so blocked-up and destroyed that no human being, except by that first narrow passage, can reach the Magic Castle which Prince Friedrich's talent and taste is making of it."

After a little thought, during which the Prince looked round at the

boy, who still continued as if softly preluding, he turned to Honorio, and said: "Thou hast done much today, complete thy task. Secure that narrow path; keep your rifles in readiness, but do not shoot till the creature can no otherwise be driven back: in any case, kindle a fire, which will frighten him if he make downwards. The man and woman take charge of the rest." Honorio rapidly bestirred himself to execute these orders.

The child continued his tune, which was no tune; a series of notes without law, and perhaps even on that account so heart-touching: the bystanders seemed as if enchanted by the movement of a song-like melody, when the father with dignified enthusiasm began to speak in this sort:

"God has given the Prince wisdom, and also knowledge to discern that all God's works are wise, each after its kind. Behold the rock, how he stands fast and stirs not, defies the weather and the sunshine; primeval trees adorn his head, and so crowned he looks abroad; neither if a mass rush away, will this continue what it was, but falls broken into many pieces and covers the side of the descent. But there too they will not tarry, capriciously they leap far down, the brook receives them, to the river he bears them. Not resisting, not contradictory, angular; no, smooth and rounded, they travel now quicker on their way, arrive, from river to river, finally at the ocean, whither march the giants in hosts, and in the depths whereof dwarfs are busy.

"But who shall exalt the glory of the Lord, whom the stars praise from Eternity to Eternity! Why look ye far into the distance? Consider here the bee: late at the end of harvest she still busily gathers; builds her a house, tight of corner, straight of wall, herself the architect and mason. Behold the ant: she knows her way, and loses it not; she piles her a dwelling of grass-halms, earth-crumbs, and needles of the fir; she piles it aloft and arches it in; but she has laboured in vain, for the horse stamps, and scrapes it all in pieces: lo! he has trodden-down her beams, and scattered her planks; impatiently he snorts, and cannot rest; for the Lord has made the horse comrade of the wind and companion of the storm, to carry man whither he wills, and woman whither she desires. But in the Wood of Palms arose he, the Lion; with earnest step traversed the wildernesses; there rules he over all creatures; his might who shall withstand? Yet man can tame him; and the fiercest of living things has reverence for the image of God, in which too the angels are made, who serve the Lord and his servants. For in the den of Lions Daniel was not afraid; he remained fast and faithful, and the wild bellowing interrupted not his song of praise."

This speech, delivered with expression of a natural enthusiasm, the child accompanied here and there with graceful tones; but now, the father having ended, he, with clear melodious voice and skilful passaging, struck-up his warble; whereupon the father took the flute, and gave note in unison, while the child sang:

From the Dens, I, in a deeper,
Prophet's song of praise can hear;
Angel-host he hath for keeper,
Needs the good man there to fear?

Lion, Lioness, agazing,
Mildly pressing round him came;
Yea, that humble, holy praising,
It hath made them tame.

The father continued, accompanying this strophe with his flute; the mother here and there touched-in as second voice.

Impressive, however, in a quite peculiar degree, it was, when the child now began to shuffle the lines of the strophe into other arrangement; and thereby if not bring out a new sense, yet heighten the feeling by leading it into self-excitement:

Angel-host around doth hover,
Us in heavenly tones to cheer;
In the Dens our head doth cover,—
Needs the poor child there to fear?

For that humble holy praising
Will permit no evil nigh:
Angels hover, watching, gazing;
Who so safe as I?

Hereupon with emphasis and elevation began all three:

For th' Eternal rules above us,
Lands and oceans rules his will;
Lions even as lambs shall love us,
And the proudest waves be still.

Whetted sword to scabbard cleaving,
Faith and Hope victorious see:
Strong, who, loving and believing,
Prays, O Lord, to thee.

All were silent, hearing, hearkening; and only when the tones ceased could you remark and distinguish the impression they had made. All was as if appeased; each affected in his way. The Prince, as if he now first saw the misery that a little ago had threatened him, looked down on his spouse, who leaning on him forbore not to draw out the little embroidered handkerchief, and therewith covered her eyes. It was blessedness for her to feel her young bosom relieved from the pressure with which the preceding minutes had loaded it. A perfect silence reigned over the crowd; they seemed to have forgotten the dangers: the conflagration below; and above, the rising-up of a dubiously-reposing Lion.

By a sign to bring the horses, the Prince first restored the group to motion; he turned to the woman, and said: "You think, then, that, once find the Lion, you could, by your singing, by the singing of this

child, with help of these flute-tones, appease him, and carry him back to his prison, unhurt and hurting no one?" They answered Yes, assuring and affirming; the castellan was given them as guide. And now the Prince started off in all speed with a few; the Princess followed slower, with the rest of the train: mother and son, on their side, under conduct of the warder, who had got himself a musket, mounted up the steeper part of the height.

Before the entrance of the hollow-way which opened their access to the Castle, they found the hunters busy heaping-up dry brushwood, to have, in any case, a large fire ready for kindling. "There is no need," said the woman: "it will all go well and peaceably, without that."

Farther on, sitting on a wall, his double-barrel resting in his lap, Honorio appeared; at his post, as if ready for every occurrence. However, he seemed hardly to notice our party; he sat as if sunk in deep thoughts, he looked round like one whose mind was not there. The woman addressed him with a prayer not to let the fire be lit; he appeared not to heed her words; she spoke on with vivacity, and cried: "Handsome young man, thou hast killed my tiger, I do not curse thee; spare my lion, good young man, I will bless thee."

Honorio was looking straight out before him, to where the sun on his course began to sink. "Thou lookest to the west," cried the woman; "thou dost well, there is much to do there; hasten, delay not, thou wilt conquer. But first conquer thyself." At this he appeared to give a smile; the woman stept on; could not, however, but look back once more at him: a ruddy sun was irradiating his face; she thought she had never seen a handsomer youth.

"If your child," said the warder now, "with his fluting and singing, can, as you are persuaded, entice and pacify the Lion, we shall soon get mastery of him after, for the creature has lain down quite close to the perforated vaults through which, as the main passage was blocked up with ruins, we had to bore ourselves an entrance into the Castle-court. If the child entice him into this latter, I can close the opening with little difficulty; then the boy, if he like, can glide out by one of the little spiral stairs he will find in the corner. We must conceal ourselves; but I shall so take my place that a rifle-ball can, at any moment, help the poor child in case of extremity."

"All these precautions are unnecessary; God and skill, piety and a blessing, must do the work."—"May be," replied the warder; "however, I know my duties. First, I must lead you, by a difficult path, to the top of the wall, right opposite the vaults and opening I have mentioned: the child may then go down, as into the arena of the show, and lead away the animal, if it will follow him." This was done: warder and mother looked down in concealment, as the child descending the screw-stairs, showed himself in the open space of the Court, and disappeared opposite them in the gloomy opening; but forthwith

gave his flute voice, which by and by grew weaker, and at last sank dumb. The pause was bodeful enough; the old hunter, familiar with danger, felt heart-sick at the singular conjuncture; the mother, however, with cheerful face, bending over to listen, showed not the smallest discomposure.

At last the flute was again heard; the child stept forth from the cavern with glittering satisfied eyes, the Lion after him, but slowly, and as it seemed with difficulty. He showed here and there desire to lie down; yet the boy led him in a half-circle through the few disleaved many-tinted trees, till at length, in the last rays of the sun, which poured-in through a hole in the ruins, he set him down, as if transfigured in the bright red light; and again commenced his pacifying song, the repetition of which we also cannot forbear:

From the Dens, I, in a deeper,
Prophet's song of praise can hear;
Angel-host he hath for keeper,
Needs the good man there to fear?

Lion, Lioness, agazing,
Mildly pressing round him came;
Yea, that humble, holy praising,
It hath made them tame.

Meanwhile the Lion had laid itself down quite close to the child, and lifted its heavy right fore-paw into his bosom; the boy as he sung gracefully stroked it; but was not long in observing that a sharp thorn had stuck itself between the balls. He carefully pulled it out; with a smile, took the particoloured silk-handkerchief from his neck, and bound up the frightful paw of the monster; so that his mother for joy bent herself back with outstretched arms; and perhaps, according to custom, would have shouted and clapped applause, had not a hard hand-grip of the warder reminded her that the danger was not yet over.

Triumphantly the child sang on, having with a few tones preluded:

For th' Eternal rules above us,
Lands and oceans rules his will;
Lions even as lambs shall love us,
And the proudest waves be still.

Whetted sword to scabbard cleaving,
Faith and Hope victorious see:
Strong, who, loving and believing,
Prays, O Lord, to thee.

Were it possible to fancy that in the countenance of so grim a creature, the tyrant of the woods, the despot of the animal kingdom, an expression of friendliness, of thankful contentment could be traced, then here was such traceable; and truly the child, in his illuminated

look, had the air as of a mighty triumphant victor; the other figure, indeed, not that of one vanquished, for his strength lay concealed in him; but yet of one tamed, of one given up to his own peaceful will. The child fluted and sang on, changing the lines according to his way, and adding new:

And so to good children bringeth
Blessed Angel help in need;
Fetters o'er the cruel flingeth,
Worthy act with wings doth speed.

So have tamed, and firmly iron'd
To a poor child's feeble knee,
Him the forest's lordly tyrant,
Pious Thought and Melody.

SUMMARY.

CHARACTERISTICS.

THE healthy know not of their health, only the sick. Unity, agreement, always silent or soft-voiced; only discord noisily proclaims itself. (p. 1.)—Happy Unconsciousness of childhood: The beginning of Inquiry is Disease. Life itself a disease, a working incited by suffering. Conscious and Unconscious domains of human activity: Meditation. Genius ever a secret to itself. The healthy understanding, not Logical or argumentative, but Intuitive: Unconscious Spontaneity the characteristic of all right performance. Virtue, when it can be philosophised of, or has become aware of itself, is sickly and beginning to decline: The barrenest of all mortals, the Sentimentalist. (2.)—In Society man first feels what he is, first becomes what he can be. To figure Society as endowed with life, the statement of a fact rather than a metaphor. What the actual condition of Society? a difficulty for the wisest. In all vital things, an Artificial and a Natural. The vigorous ages of a Roman Commonwealth, and of *all* Commonwealths. Man's highest and sole blessedness to toil, and know what to toil at. Healthy Literature, and unhealthy: So soon as Prophecy and inspired Poetry cease, Argumentation and jangling begin. (9.)—Silence and Mystery: Hymns to the Night: What mortals call Death, properly the beginning of Life. In the rudest mind some intimation of the greatness there is in Mystery. (14.)—Society in our days boastfully and painfully conscious of itself: So-called March of Intellect. Our whole relations to the Universe become an Inquiry, a Doubt. Self-consciousness not the disease, but the symptom and attempt towards cure. The outward or Physical diseases of our Society; a whole nosology of them. Our Spiritual condition no less sickly than our Physical. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, we have 'Discourses on the Evidences;' endeavouring to make it probable such a thing as Religion exists. Literature but a branch of Religion, always participating in its character: The modern sin of View-hunting and scene-painting. Literature fast becoming one boundless self-devouring Review, like a sick thing 'listening to itself.' (16.)—Philosophy, except as Poetry and Religion, should have no being. The disease of Metaphysics. Doubt, the inexhaustible material whereon Action works; which only earnest Action can fashion into Certainty. How, by merely testing and rejecting what is not, shall we ever attain possession of what *is*? The profitable Speculation,—What is to be done; and How to do it? Only in free Effort can any blessedness be imagined for us. Eras of Faith; and our own era of Faithlessness: The Godlike vanished from the world. To the better order of minds any mad joy of Denial has long since ceased. The Old has passed away, and Time still in pangs of travail with the New. (22.)—Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures*, and Mr. Hope's *Essay*, symbols of the two

Extremes of our whole modern system of Thought; its effete Spiritualism, and dead decomposition of Materialistic jargon. Human Progress: Universal law of Change and Growth. This age also not wholly without its Prophets. Utilitarian problems and failures: Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action. Strange light-gleams: Age of Miracles; as it ever was, is, and will be. He that has an eye and a heart can even now say—Why should I falter? Behind and before each one of us lies a whole Godlike Eternity, of inheritance and of possibility. (29.)

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.

Goethe, a man well worth looking at. His kingly Head a very palace of Thought. A most royal work appointed to be done there. This Rag-Fair of a world all transfigured, and authentically revealed to be still holy, still divine. (p. 39.)—Two great men sent among us: Bonaparte, like an all-devouring earthquake, hurling kingdom over kingdom; Goethe, the mild-shining, inaudible Light, making Chaos once more into a Creation. The poorest Life no idle dream, but a solemn, earnest reality. (40.)

DEATH OF GOETHE.

Goethe died at Weimar, 22d March 1832: His last words, a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his last movement, to work at his appointed task. A death full of greatness and sacredness: If his course was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. In the death of a good man, Eternity seen looking through Time. (p. 42.)—A New Era began with Goethe, the ulterior tendencies of which are yet unmanifested. The real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. Honour to him who first 'through the impassable paves a road.' Goethe's Works. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeons of Unbelief, has the assurance of such a man come like tidings of deliverance! The unwearied Workman now rests from his labours; while the fruit of them is growing, and to grow. (44.)

BIOGRAPHY.

Biography, or human insight into human personality, the basis of all that can interest a human creature. (p. 51.)—Conversation, almost wholly biographic and autobiographic. Even in Art and highest Art, we can nowise forget the Artist; the biographic interest inevitably comprising its deepest and noblest meaning. History, in its best and truest form, the essence of innumerable Biographies. Modern 'Histories' of the Philosophic kind; and their dreary interminable vacuity. Fictitious Narratives, or mimic Biographies: The inspired Speaker, and the uninspired Babbler. The Foolishest of existing mortals. (52.)—Sauerteig on the indispensability and significance of Reality. The old Mythologies were once Philosophies, and the old Epics *believed* Histories. Imagination but a poor affair when it has to part company with Understanding. Belief, the first condition of all spiritual Force whatsoever. Dreary modern Epics; and their uncredited, incredible Supernatural 'Machinery.' Even the *probable*, however skilfully wrought, is but the Shadow of some half-seen Reality. A whole epitome of the Infinite lies enfolded in the Life of every Man. Not the material, only the Seer and Poet

wanting. Great is Invention, but that is but a poor sort with which Belief is not concerned: Its highest exercise, not to invent Fiction; but to invent or bring forth *new Truth*. Interest of the smallest historical *fact*, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious* event: Momentary glimpse of an actual, living Peasant of the year 1651: The Past all holy to us: The poorest adventure of some poorest Outcast, after seventy years are come and gone, has meaning and unfathomable instruction for us. (55.)—Secret for being graphic: An open loving Heart the beginning of all knowledge. Literary froth, and literary substance: The multitudinous men, women and children, that make up the Army of British Authors. James Boswell: White of Selborne. One good Biography in England, *Boswell's Johnson*. (62.)

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.

Mr. Croker's editorial peculiarities and deficiencies. (p. 67.)—Boswell, a man whose bad qualities lay open to the general eye: What great and genuine good was in him, nowise so self-evident. His true *Hero-worship* for poor rusty-coated, rough old Samuel Johnson. His uncouth symbolic relation to his decrepit, death-sick Era. That loose-flowing, careless-looking Work of his, a picture by one of Nature's own Artists. His grand intellectual talent an *unconscious* one, of far higher reach and significance than Logic. Poor Bozzy an ill-assorted, glaring mixture of the highest and the lowest. Johnson's own Writings stand on a quite inferior level to this *Johnsoniad* of Boswell: It shows us objects that in very deed existed; it is all *true*. (73.)—What a pathetic, sacred, in every sense poetic meaning is implied in that one word, *Past!* This Book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the History of England during those days, than any book taking upon itself that special aim. Robertson's 'History of Scotland.' How 'Histories' are written. Boswell's conversational jottings, no infringement of social privacy. Man properly an *incarnated* Word: Out of Silence comes strength. Thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is harmless? (81.)—Our interest in Biography considerably modified by the dull servile imitancy of mankind. Significant resemblances of Men and Sheep. Mystic power of Imitancy and Association. Amid the dull millions are scattered here and there leading, original natures; with eye to *see*, and will to *do*. Such Men properly the synopsis and epitome of the age in which they live; whose Biographies are above all things worth having. Of such chosen men, although of their humbler ranks, was Samuel Johnson; his existence no idle Dream, but a Reality which he transacted *awake*. As the highest Gospel was a Biography, so is the Life of every good man still an indubitable Gospel. (88.)—The Contradiction of Inward and Outward, which yawns wide enough in every Life, in Johnson wider than in most. His calling by nature, rather towards Active than Speculative life; as a Doer of Work, he had shone even more than as Speaker of the Word. His disposition for *royalty* in his early boyhood. College life; proud as the proudest, poor as the poorest: 'Mistaken' estimate of Christian Scholarship. Ushership at Market Bosworth: Bread and water of affliction, so bitter that he could not swallow them. Tries Literature. His kind, true, brave-hearted Wife. Young gentlemen boarded, and taught. Privations and trials of Authorship: Its transition period, from the protection of Patrons to that of the Public. Johnson the first Author of any significance, who faithfully lived by the day's work of his craft: His sturdy rebellion against the Chesterfield 'encumbrances.' (92.)—Johnson's Era wholly divided against itself. How was a noble man, resolute for the Truth, to act

in it? Glory to our brave Samuel, who once more gave the world assurance of a Man! Wrong, not only different from Right, but infinitely different: Johnson's Religion as the light of life to him. His rugged literary labours: His insignificant-looking 'Parliamentary Debates,' the origin of our stupendous Fourth Estate. So poor is he, his Wife must leave him, and seek shelter among other relations: Could not remember the day he had passed free from pain: Manfully makes the best of his hard lot. The fantastic article called 'Fame,' of little other than a poor market value. Thy Fame! Unhappy mortal, where will it and thou be in some fifty years? (103.)—Gradually a little circle gathers round the Wise man. In his fifty-third year, he is beneficed by royal bounty. Real Primate of all England. The *last* of many things, Johnson was the last genuine English Tory. The highest Courage not the Courage to die decently, but to live manfully. Johnson's talent of silence: Where there is nothing farther to be *done*, there shall nothing more be *said*. His thorough Truthfulness, and clear hatred of every form of Cant. Few men have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than rough old Samuel. Catherine Chambers's death-bed: The marketplace at Uttoxeter. Johnson's Politeness: His Prejudices: His culture and sympathies wholly English. Samuel Johnson and David Hume, embodiments of the two grand spiritual Antagonisms of their time: Whoso should combine the intrepid Candour, and decisive scientific Clearness of the one, with the Reverence, Love and devout Humility of the other, were the whole man of a new time. (115.)

GOETHE'S WORKS.

The greatest epoch in a man's life, not always his death; yet it is always the most noticeable. A transition, out of visible Time into invisible Eternity. (p. 132.)—The Greatness of Great Men. *Hero-Worship*, the only creed which can never grow obsolete. Man never altogether a clothes-horse; under the clothes is always a body and a soul. Difference between God-creation and Tailor-creation. The Great Man of an age, the most important phenomenon therein. Women, born worshippers of Greatness, either real or hypothetical. Of all rituals, that of Self-worship the most faithfully observed. (134.)—Greatness of Bonaparte and of Goethe contrasted. Parliamentary woolgathering: The great desideratum, to produce a few members *worth* electing. Modern funeral celebrations, little better than solemn parodies. (144.)—The summary of each man's works, the Life he led. Goethe's *Wahrheit und Dichtung*. At no period of the World's History can a gifted man be born when he will not find enough to do: Goethe's peculiar perplexities and victories. His riant, joyful childhood; kind plenty in every sense encircling him: A beautiful Boy; the picture of his early years among our most genuine poetic Idyls. His parents. The Victory at Bergen: His Father's grim defiance and hatred of the French. His Father, with occasional subsidiary tutors, his schoolmaster. Old Frankfort notabilities: The *Judengasse:* Von Reineck: Hofrath Huisgen: Workmen and workshops. Beautiful Gretchen, and Goethe's first experience of natural magic. (147.)—At Leipzig University: Interview with Gottsched: Religious perplexities; sickness; returns home. The World-Poet, destined by paternal judgment for a Lawyer. To Strasburg. The good Frederike: Is Goethe a bad man, or not a bad man? Jung Stilling's testimony. His 'goodness' and 'badness' not quite easily taken stock of. Intercourse with Herder. The German intellectual Chaos: Goethe's allotted task therein. His first literary productions. Established at Weimar. (160.)—The inward life of Goethe nobly recorded in the long series of his Writings. *Faust*, the passionate cry

of the world's despair, proclaiming, as amid the wreck of Time,—It is ended! *Wilhelm Meister*, an emblem of warm, hearty, sunny human Endeavour; with as yet no recognition of Divinity: In the *Wanderjahre*, melodious Reverence becomes once more triumphant; and deep all-pervading Faith both speaks and sings. A tribute of gratitude from 'Fifteen Englishmen.' Goethe the Uniter and victorious Reconciler of the most distracted age since the Introduction of Christianity. What Strength actually is, and how to try for it. Goethe's noble power of insight: For him, as for Shakspeare, the world lies all translucent, encircled with Wonder: His figurativeness lies in the very centre of his being: The majestic Calmness of both; perfect tolerance for all men and things. Excellencies of Goethe's style. If Shakspeare were the greater nature, he was also less cultivated, and more careless. Goethe's Spiritual History, the ideal emblem of all true men's in these days: Let us mark well the road he fashioned for himself, and in the dim weltering Chaos rejoice to find a paved way. Goethe's Political abstinence. His Life and his Writings a possession to the world forever. (172.)

CORN-LAW RHYMES.

Smelfungus's despair at the present condition of Poetry: The end having come, it is nt that we end. (p. 184.)—And yet, if the whole welkin hang overcast in drizzly dinginess, the feeblest speck of blue will not be unwelcome. The Corn-Law Rhymer, one of that singular class who really have something to say; he has *believed*, and therefore is again believable. A Sheffield Worker in brass and iron; but no 'Uneducated Poet,' such as dilettante patronage delights to foster. A less misfortune, in these strange days, to be trained among the Uneducated classes, than among the Educated: Few Great Men ever nursed with any conscious eye to their vocation. In the poorest cottage are Books, is One Book, with an interpreting response to whatever is Deepest in man. Shakspeare's Learning: The grand schoolmaster is Practice,—Work. Unspeakable advantages of uneducated Working classes, over educated Unworking. (185.)—The Corn-Law Rhymer's sturdy, defiant attitude: An earnest, truth-speaking, *genuine* man. Strong and beautiful thoughts not wanting in him. A life of painfulness, toil, insecurity, scarcity; yet he fronts it like a man: Affection dwells with Danger, all the holier for the stern environment. Not as a rebel does he stand; yet as a free man, spokesman of free men, not far from rebelling against much. He feels deeply the frightful condition of our entire Social Affairs; and sees in Bread-tax the summary of all our evils. The black colours of his Life do not hide from him that God's world, if made into a House of Imprisonment, can also be a House of Prayer. The primary idea of all Poetry, Time resting on Eternity. Errors and shortcomings. He has looked, unblinded, into the prophetic Book of Existence, and read many little passages there: The Poor Grinder; the Poacher; the Workman's Sabbath. (191.)—The Workhouse, the bourne whither all these actors and Workers are tragically bound: Must it, then, grow worse and worse, till the last brave heart is broken in England? All Reform except a moral one unavailing. The Rhapsody of 'Enoch Wray,' an inarticulate, half-audible Epic; a blind aged man, himself a ruin, encircled with the ruin of a whole Era. To the Working portion of the Aristocracy, such a Voice from their humble working Brother will be both welcome and instructive: To the Idle portion it may be unwelcome enough. The case of Balaam the son of Beor: Balaam's occupation gone. A parting word of admonition: Poetry, or Prose? The Socrates'-Demon, such as dwells in every mortal. The Corn-Law Rhymer already a king, even more than many now crowned as such. (203.)

ON HISTORY AGAIN.

Fragment of an Inaugural Discourse delivered before the 'Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty.' (p. 212.)—History the most profitable of all studies: The Message, or Letter of Instructions, which all Mankind delivers to each man. Immeasurable imperfection of our highest Historians: Of the *thing* now gone silent, called Past, how much do we know? Nature, however, not blamable: Man's plentiful equipment for publishing himself, by Tongue, Pen and Printing-Press. His chief wants, want of Honesty and of Understanding: The event worthiest to be known, likeliest of all to be least spoken of. (212.)—Threatenings of an Historic Deluge. History, before it can become Universal History, needs of all things to be compressed. Wise Memory and wise Oblivion: Oblivion the dark page, whereon Memory writes in characters of Light. Imperfections enough in practice: And yet only what bears fruit is at last rememberable. Historical perspective. History the true Epic Poem, and universal Divine Scripture. (216.)

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE TALE.

Rumours and mis-rumours concerning Goethe's Tale of Tales: A genuine English Translation now handed-in for judgment. (p. 221.)—Phantasmagory not Allegory. A wonderful Emblem of our wonderful and woful Transition Age. Clue to the significance of the several Figures in the Poem. Imagination, in her Works of Art, should play like a sort of music upon us: She herself cannot condition and bargain; she must wait what shall be given her. (223.)—Metaphysical Subtilty and Audacity, the first flickerings, and audible announcement, of the New Age waiting to be born. How they press poor old Spiritual Tradition into their service; and the havoc they make with him: They give him Wisdom which he cannot use; but have no power to contribute the least to his wonted Nourishment. (228.)—The Wisdom, which toil-worn Tradition could not and dared not appropriate, is eagerly devoured by newly-awakened Speculative Thought: Glory of comprehending, and of sympathy with Nature. How Logical Acuteness is apt to despise Experimental Philosophy; and how Philosophy gets the best of the bargain. How can poor Sceptical Dexterity ever find the way, across the Time-River of stormy Human Effort, to the unutterable repose and blessedness of Spiritual Affection? The proffered Shadow of Superstition: Noontide Bridge of Speculative Science. (229.)—Experimental Thought would fain decipher the forms and intimations of the impending Future: Advent and coöperation of Poetic Insight. The 'open secret' of the Coming Change. (232.)—Poetic Insight or Intuitive Perception, wedded to Practical Endeavour now grown decrepit and garrulous. In the absence of Insight, poor old Practicality is surprised and disconcerted by a visitation of Logic: Death of their foolish little household Pet; which can now only become 'a true companion,' by 'the touch' of Spiritual Affection. (234.)—Practical Endeavour trudging on, sullen and forlorn, is cunningly robbed by the Shadow of newly-revived Superstition.

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